

CHANG'AN 26 BCE

AN AUGUSTAN AGE IN CHINA

Edited by **MICHAEL NYLAN** and **GRIET VANKEERBERGHEN**

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with the kind assistance of Michael Loewe

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FRONTISPIECE: Detail of mural on ceiling of tomb at Jiaotong University, late Western Han. Reproduced with permission from Cheng Linquan 1991, fig. 1.

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE CHINESE SCHOLARS WHO HAVE HELPED THE volume editors most in their research on Western Han Chang'an: Wang Xiaomeng 王小蒙 and Hou Yongjian 侯甬坚, Tang Xiaofeng 唐晓峰 and Huang Yijun 黄义军, He Ruyue 何如月 and Tian Yaqi 田亚岐, Wang Shejiao 王社教, Zhang Xiangyu 張翔宇, Cao Long 曹龙, Liu Rui 劉瑞, Xiao Ailing 肖愛玲, and Pan Wei 潘葳, and last, but not least, Abby (Zhang Lizhi 张力之) and He Jianye 何剑叶. Without their unfailing intelligence, extraordinary resourcefulness, and exemplary organizational skills, this book would not have been possible.

本书谨献给几位曾经为此出版项目的编辑们在西安的研究提供了很大帮助的中国学者：王小蒙、侯甬坚、唐晓峰、黄义军、何如月、田亚岐、王社教、张翔宇、曹龍、刘瑞、肖爱玲、潘葳、还有张力之、以及何剑叶。没有他们的智慧和博学，以及非凡的组织能力，很难想象本书的顺利出版。

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ix
Editorial Note.	xi
Chronology of Dynasties and Han Reign Periods	xiii

Introduction

Michael NYLAN 戴梅可	3
-----------------------------	---

PART 1. The Built Environment and Archaeology of Han Chang'an 53

1 The Evolution of Imperial Urban Form in Western Han Chang'an TANG Xiaofeng 唐晓峰	55
2 Chang'an and Rome: Structural Parallels and the Logics of Urban Form Carlos F. NOREÑA 羅瑞達	75
3 Supplying the Capital with Water and Food Michael NYLAN 戴梅可.	99
4 Mural Tombs in Late Western Han Chang'an Arlen LIAN 練春海	131
5 Chang'an's Funerary Culture and the Core Han Culture HUANG Yijun 黄义军	153
6 The Residential Wards 理 of Western Han Chang'an ZHANG Jihai 张继海	175
7 The Tombs Built for Han Chengdi and Migrations of the Population Michael LOEWE 魯惟一	201

PART 2. Sociopolitical Transformations in Late Western Han 219

8 Chengdi's Reign, Problems and Controversies Michael LOEWE 魯惟一	221
9 Recasting the Imperial Court in Late Western Han: Rank, Duty, and Alliances during Institutional Change Luke HABBERSTAD 何祿凱	239

10	The Suburban Sacrifice Reforms and the Evolution of the Imperial Sacrifices TIAN Tian 田天	263
11	Calendrical Computation Numbers and Han Dynasty Politics: A Study of Gu Yong's Three Troubles Theory LIU Tseng-kuei 劉增貴	293
12	The Politics of Omenology in Chengdi's Reign Shao-yun YANG 楊劭允.	323
13	Pining for the West: Chang'an in the Life of Kings and Their Families during Chengdi's Reign Griet VANKEERBERGHEN 方麗特.	347
PART 3. Leading Figures in Late Western Han		367
14	Liu Xiang and Liu Xin Michael LOEWE 魯惟一.	369
15	A <i>Fu</i> by Liu Xin on His Travels in Shanxi and Inner Mongolia David R. KNECHTGES 康達維.	391
16	Yang Yun's Biography, His Outlook, and His Poem Jurij L. KROLL 科洛利	411
17	Looking Backward: The Rise of Medical Tradition in the Han Period Miranda BROWN 董慕達.	441
18	The Social Roles of the <i>Annals</i> Classic in Late Western Han Mark CSIKSZENTMIHALYI 齊思敏.	461
19	The Late Western Han Historian Chu Shaosun Hans VAN ESS 葉翰.	477
Afterword: New Perspectives and Avenues for Future Research Michael NYLAN 戴梅可.		505
Glossary.		519
Bibliography		559
List of Contributors		601
Index		605

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS BOOK GREW OUT OF A DOUBLE INTELLECTUAL CONCERN: TO DO JUSTICE to a place and to a period, and to bring the best Chinese scholarship to historians interested in comparisons in Europe and the United States. Western Han Chang'an, now hidden beneath the sprawling modern city of Xi'an, was, in its heyday, a magnificent city on a par with ancient Rome. Unlike Rome, it has remained largely unstudied, especially in Euro-America. Equally astonishingly, few even in China seem to realize that late Western Han was not a period of dynastic decline but an era in which the past was rethought and the present remade, with huge implications for the future course of empire in China.

The appeal to rethink late Western Han and the attempt to draw attention to Chang'an as a serious topic of historical study clearly resonated. The editors gathered an impressive array of scholars for an international conference, "Chang'an 26 BCE: From Drains to Dreams," held at the University of California, Berkeley, in April of 2011. Many of the scholars present at that conference became contributors to this volume. The editors were also successful in garnering institutional support for the project. Three agencies funded the conference: the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, the American Council of Learned Societies (Comparative Perspectives on Chinese Culture and Society Fellowship), and the Center for Chinese Studies at the UC Berkeley. A Collaborative Research Fellowship (2010) from the American Council of the Learned Societies enabled the editors to take the project to a higher level, providing both of them with opportunities to travel to China together and with substantial research time at their respective institutions. It therefore allowed the editors the time and resources to work across disciplinary, linguistic, and national boundaries in their attempt to create, in collaboration with the book's contributors, a new perspective on late Western Han Chang'an. Additional support for the production of the book was provided by an Insight Grant (2012–16) from the Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada and by a generous subvention from the American Council of Learned Societies.

In China, the editors were received with great openness, and this book is dedicated to the scholars in Xi'an and Beijing who hosted them, traveled with them through Shaanxi, showed them the archaeological sites, kept them abreast of recent discoveries, and engaged with them in lively and fruitful discussions.

In addition, Michael Nylan would like to thank Rafe de Crespigny for introducing her to several valuable secondary sources; Bill Nelson for his masterful mapmaking on

repeated occasions; Erich Gruen for his help in regard to a few crucial bibliographic questions; Scott McGinnis for his patience with GIS inquiries; Brian Lander for his careful reading of the introduction; Spencer Wayne Smith for his collation of parts of the immense bibliography; and Ding Yan, a Xi'an archaeologist, for his offer of better images of Zhang Anshi's tomb. Throughout, Vivian Sophia and Paul Colley put up with innumerable questions about computing. Erin Leigh Inama and Stuart Aque took time out of their busy schedules to revise tables and charts for the book. John Ceballos was patient with a pesky problem about a 1924 image. The International and Area Studies Academic Program at UC Berkeley paid for two Xi'an archaeologists to come to Berkeley to discuss their work with graduate students and the editors. Peter Zhou, director, and He Jianye, Chinese reference librarian, at the East Asian Library at UC Berkeley, gave tirelessly throughout the entire research and editing processes in their own inimitable ways. Their colleagues, especially Deborah Rudolph, Susan Xue, and Bruce Williams, at key points supplied critical help. Robert J. Litz substantially improved early drafts of certain chapters. Finally, Christian de Pee cheerfully let me "borrow" a Weber quotation that he had used.

Griet Vankeerberghen thanks her coeditor for introducing her to the fascinating world of Western Han Chang'an; Huang Wen-yi for help inputting editorial changes and much appreciated assistance with the bibliography and with correspondence; Daniel Shultz for applying his newly acquired skills in GIS toward producing many imaginative maps for the book; Lin Fan and Lee Jae-yeol for their early research contributions on Chang'an; Rebecca Robinson for help at a crucial stage in the compilation of the bibliography; Hans Beck, for a joint first visit to the remains of Chang'an city; Hou Xudong for key information on a primary source; Liu Rui for sharing his thoughts on a newly excavated royal tomb; Macy Zheng, reference librarian at McGill's Humanities and Social Sciences Library, for being willing to marshal all available resources to meet the project's needs; and Tom Beghin for lending a trusted helping hand and a comforting listening ear, whenever needed.

The editors jointly thank Michael Loewe, who has solved many a difficulty with his usual spirit and erudition. Naomi Noble Richard has vastly improved the stylistic coherence of the book with her superb editing. Elinor Levine of the Center for Chinese Studies at UC Berkeley, gave, on innumerable occasions, her expert assistance in organizational matters, as did Martin Backstrom. He Jianye went far beyond her duties as a reference librarian as she almost daily mustered her many talents to move the project forward. Lorri Hagman and Tim Zimmermann at the University of Washington Press have proven not only able but imaginative editors; they have, throughout the process, shown both professionalism and good cheer. Julie Van Pelt's persistent queries during copyediting prevented many a slip. Last but not least, Nylan and Vankeerberghen thank their contributors for their unstinting hard work and their patient answers to endless questions.

EDITORIAL NOTE

THIS BOOK FOLLOWS MICHAEL LOEWE'S RENDERING OF HAN TITLES, RATHER than those proposed by Charles Hucker for Ming officials or those proposed by Han Bielenstein for Han officials, aside from two changes: (1) as "Gentleman" seems to convey little to American readers and it can be used simply as a polite term of address in early China, we have changed Lang 郎 to Courtier, aside from Kroll's chapter; (2) where Loewe very occasionally uses internal commas and brackets in his titles (as in Colonel, Central Ramparts), we have rendered the meaning (as in Colonel of the Central Ramparts). Readers should meanwhile note that Loewe himself has changed the Superintendent in titles to Commissioner, also that he uses Imperial Counsellor for two titles, that of Da Sikong 大司空 and Yushi Dafu 御史大夫. Where this might create confusion, we have rendered Da Sikong as Imperial Counsellor of the Executive Council. All other titles follow Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary*.

CHRONOLOGY OF DYNASTIES AND HAN REIGN PERIODS

Five Lords	Legendary; traditionally third millennium BCE
Xia	Traditionally 2205–1766 BCE
Shang	Traditionally 1600–ca. 1050 BCE
Western Zhou	ca. 1050–771 BCE
Chunqiu.	770–481 BCE
Zhanguo.	475–222 BCE
Qin.	221–210 BCE
Western Han	206 BCE–9 CE

Reign periods

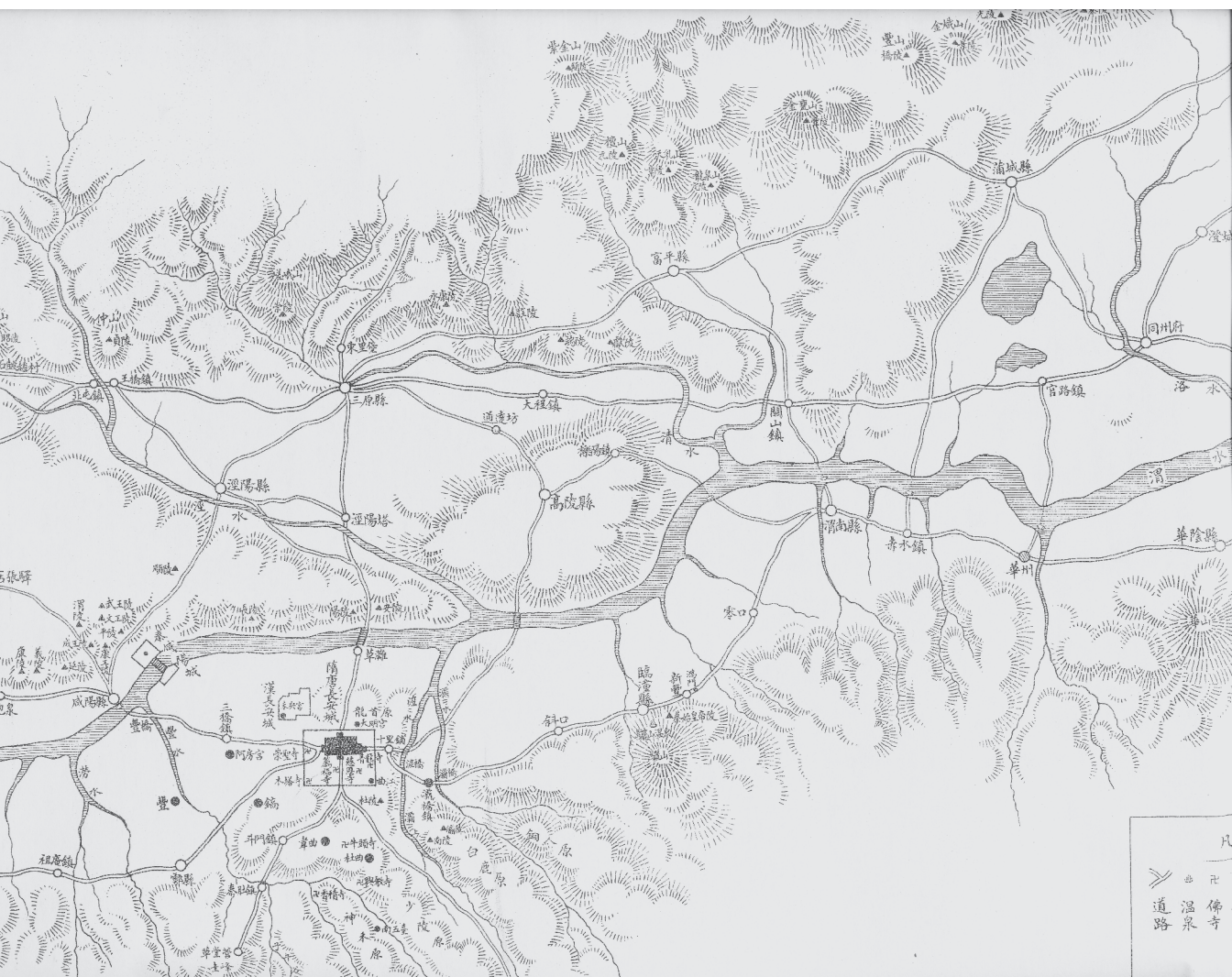
Gaodi (Gaozu).	206–195 BCE
Huidi	195–188 BCE
Shaodi Gong.	188–184 BCE
Shaodi Hong.	184–180 BCE
Wendi.	180–157 BCE
Jingdi	157–141 BCE
Wudi	141–87 BCE
Zhaodi	87–74 BCE
Xuandi	74–48 BCE
Yuandi.	48–33 BCE
Chengdi	33–7 BCE
Aidi	7–1 BCE
Pingdi.	1 BCE–6 CE
(Liu Ying)	6–23 CE
Xin dynasty.	9–23 CE (Wang Mang Interregnum)
Eastern Han.	25–220 CE

Reign periods

Guangwudi	25–57 CE
Mingdi	57–75 CE
Zhangdi	75–88 CE
Hedi	88–105 CE
Shangdi.	105–106 CE
Andi	106–125 CE
Shundi	125–144 CE

Zhidi	144–146 CE
Huandi	146–168 CE
Lingdi.	168–189 CE
Xiandi	189–220 CE
Sanguo	220–65 CE
Jin	265–420 CE
Western.	265–316 CE
Eastern	317–420 CE
Nanbeichao (a.k.a. Six Dynasties) . .	420–589 CE
Sui	589–617 CE
Tang	618–907 CE
Song	960–1279 CE
Northern	960–1126 CE
Southern	1126–1279 CE
Yuan	1279–1368 CE
Ming.	1368–1644 CE
Qing	1644–1911 CE

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Old Japanese map of the Xi'an area and surrounding mountains forming the Guanzhong basin. Dated 1933 CE. After Adachi 1933, frontispiece.

Introduction

Michael Nylan 戴梅可

The certainty of cultural generalization is reassuring but hollow;
uncertainty is challenging but rewarding. Context is everything.

—John R. Clarke

LEWIS MUMFORD SAW THE CITY AS BOTH A COLLECTION OF ARCHITECTURAL forms in space and the container and transmitter of culture and history.¹ Mumford's observation is surely germane to the great capital cities in antiquity, since they tended to have only one dominant "high culture"—that performed and exemplified by the governing elites of the time.² This book concerns one of the most important cities of the distant past: Western Han Chang'an, which was nearly three times the size of Rome, nearly four times larger than Alexandria, and seventeen times bigger than Byzantium (Fig. 1.01).³

Literally thousands of studies discuss Augustan and Hadrianic Rome, celebrating imperial Rome as the premier city of the Mediterranean (Alexandria, Athens, and later Constantinople being but poor rivals). Yet no single work in a Western language (and remarkably few in Chinese or Japanese) provides an overview of Western Han Chang'an, the fabled capital of that realm halfway around the world, though that imperial capital boasted comparable numbers of residents, comparable numbers of imperial subjects (more than sixty million, or roughly a quarter of the world's population), and comparably vast territories. That such a treatment of the Western Han capital is long overdue is demonstrated by a rough comparison of book-length treatments on Rome and the Roman empire to those devoted to the Western Han center of power: in the library of the University of California, Berkeley, some 7,635 books (4,588 in English)

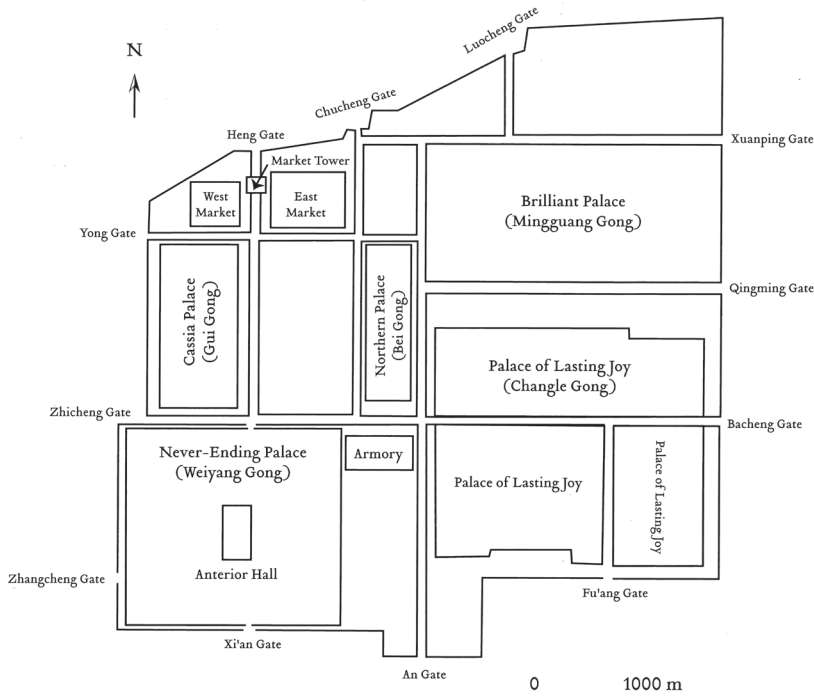


FIG. 1.01 Plan of Han Chang'an, giving English renderings for the palace but no dates for the construction of the various palaces. After Barbieri-Low 2007. Note that we have not translated the Chang'an palaces as per Barbieri-Low, but for many people his translations represent the standard.

take classical Rome as their principle subject. By contrast, at the time of this writing, only a handful of books—fewer than thirty in Asian languages and none in English or the major European languages—examine the Western Han capital at Chang'an. Nonetheless, more literary records exist from the reign of the tenth Western Han emperor, Chengdi (33–7 BCE), at the capital than from any era before the eleventh century CE.⁴ Read in light of the wealth of newly excavated artifacts and sites, these records allow us to aim at what is hitherto unprecedented in early China studies: a richly textured and fully annotated microhistory of roughly three decades in the capital region, when the Western Han capital flourished brilliantly before it was partially razed, in 23 CE.⁵ This in-depth survey by some of the world's best scholars, Chinese and Western, builds a strong (if often implicit) case for the need to thoroughly revise the standard narratives we have inherited for the two Han dynasties—the Western/Former Han (202 BCE–9 CE) and Eastern/Later Han (25–220 CE), which were separated by a brief interregnum, the Xin dynasty.

Over the millennia, remarkably little thought has gone into Chengdi's reign, presumably because its history was told first by a "restored" Eastern Han dynasty whose rulers were happy to co-opt the signal achievements of Chengdi's reign, and, most recently, by nationalistic historians who have deplored Chengdi's refusal to engage in

expansionist ventures. To those who cling to the nativist versions of history put forward in the twentieth century, this book quite unaccountably concentrates on Chengdi, an emperor usually dismissed as being of “no significance”; up to now Chengdi has been fortunate to escape blanket condemnation for his lack of an heir and his tumultuous consort relations, seen as key factors contributing to the eventual downfall of Western Han in 9 CE at the hands of the “usurper” Wang Mang. Things were hardly so simple, as this volume attests. At the time of Chengdi’s death, the Western Han empire was still in fairly good shape, so far as we can tell, as the chapters by Michael Loewe, Tian Tian, Huang Yijun, and Shao-yun Yang suggest.⁶ To blame Chengdi for the demise of Western Han, which came nearly twenty years after his reign (as did the moralizing Eastern Han and post-Han historians), is to indulge in anachronistic retrojections and also to ignore the sheer brilliance of the age led by an emperor whom contemporaries likened to a “god.”⁷ Chengdi cannot be faulted for snoozing on the job or even, perhaps, for ceding too much power to the Wang consort clan, as he created far fewer new noble titles than other emperors who escaped censure:

Xuandi 21 (during the supposed mid-dynastic florescence)⁸

Yuandi 2

Chengdi 10

the post-Chengdi era of 16 years

Aidi 13

Pingdi 22

Chengdi was hardly excessive in his generosity toward his allies,⁹ though he undoubtedly found it difficult to resist powerful forces at court.¹⁰ In addition, Chengdi’s decision to enforce the sumptuary regulations in Chang’an aimed to diminish the cultural capital of the consort clans, for it placed limits on their lavish displays at funerals, where patronage ties were performed and strengthened.¹¹ For the first eleven years of Chengdi’s reign, the powerful Wang clan members and their opponents seemed in balance at the court. The Han histories further relate Chengdi’s various attempts to curb Wang family power, not all of which were successful (see the chapter by Habberstad).¹² To promote the health of the body politic, Chengdi ensured that the territories of nobles and kings be surrounded by commanderies under his direct control, which is significant, as is the remarkable stability of Chengdi’s relations with the high-ranking princes (see the chapter by Vankeerberghen).¹³ But early on, the Chengdi reign witnessed at least two major floods on the Yellow River, and massive outlays for disaster relief and flood control measures surely complicated the court’s finances, especially with productivity sharply down in the North China Plain near the river. At one point, there was even talk of evacuating the capital,¹⁴ such was the threat to life and property. Astrological measures had had to be devised quickly to avert crises, through ritual renewals of Heaven’s Mandate (see Liu Tseng-kuei’s chapter). Still, a few local outbreaks

of rebellion, here and there (contra Wang Zijin and other mainland scholars), plus a spike in natural disasters, hardly portended the collapse of the Liu ruling house, as such crises never reached levels like those besetting the end of Wudi's reign (r. 141–87 BCE) (see Shao-yun Yang's chapter).¹⁵ Chengdi's anti-expansionist inclinations, his failure to produce a viable male heir, and possibly his rejection of Lady Ban (Ban Jieyu) for the post of empress, may have left him a ready target for the ire of military families like the Bans, when members of the Ban family were compiling the first systematic treatments of Chengdi's reign a century later.¹⁶

For our purposes here, far more intriguing is a constellation of projects initiated by Chengdi or his court—it is always hard to tell which, given the rhetorical style employed in the early histories. These projects included reorganizations of the capital bureaucracy and the administration of both commanderies and kingdoms, the subject of Luke Habberstad's chapter; an impressive imperial library project begun in 26 BCE that either subsumed or was superimposed on older administrative archives, as detailed earlier by Michael Nylan;¹⁷ the systematic collection and collation of local maps and surveys of local customs by court envoys (see below);¹⁸ a dramatic reorganization of the imperial sacrificial schedule that consciously sacralized the capital city as holy site of the emperor's person (see Tian's chapter);¹⁹ and a major change in the utilization of the imperial mausoleum towns (see Loewe's chapter on Yanling and Changling).²⁰ Chengdi also used his capital city in unprecedented ways, in that he seldom ventured far outside his city walls and never went on the extensive tours of inspection, or "progresses," that his predecessors deemed necessary and enjoyable (see Map 1.05a–b).²¹ Taken together, Chengdi's projects were to instantiate a new notion of fully unified empire. (Historians once confidently ascribed the first conceptions of unified "empire" on this grand scale to Han Wudi and his court, but the focus of Wudi's ambitions lay elsewhere, judging from the extant records.)

Just as historians of imperial Rome have only recently begun to consider shifts in the use of monumental buildings as backdrops to compel an appreciation of the exercise of power,²² so are historians of Western Han Chang'an learning to inject more material specificity into their portrayals of dynastic operations and charisma. Thus the starting point for this volume must be the topography of Chengdi's capital at Chang'an, insofar as its walls, towergates, and buildings provided dramatic settings for the cast of characters in the capital and court (see Fig. 1.08a–c). Continual reference to the built environment (up to now nearly ignored in Western-language treatments of the dynasty) is crucial to the reconstruction of aspects of Chengdi's era and late Western Han urban life (see Zhang Jihai's chapter).²³ The Western Han founder, Liu Bang (r. 202–195 BCE), and his chief advisor had established the principle that improvements to the infrastructure and embellishment of the capital city were both the responsibility and the glory of the ruling house. Monumental architecture—what one authority dubbed the "great universal writing of humanity"—was inscribed there for all to see,²⁴ in its vertical and horizontal extensions. Decorated surfaces, like architecture, were

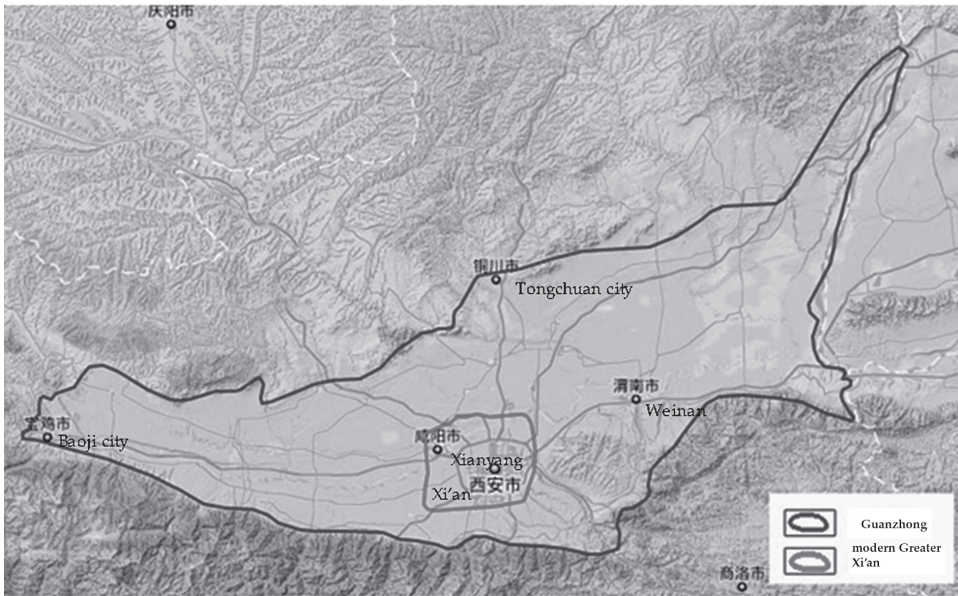


FIG. 1.02 Rubbing of a pictorial stone image, probably from Eastern Han (otherwise undated), depicting animal combat scenes. The stone was excavated in 1988, in Henan, Nanyang, Wolong Qu, Qilingang. Dimensions: 40 cm high, 145 cm long. The original stone is held in Henan Province, Nanyang city, Hanhuaguan. This photograph is by Michael Nylan of a rubbing in her possession.

FIG. 1.03 This large Western Han wooden puppet (to hold imperial clothes during a parade?) was excavated, according to identifications, in Yexi county and is currently on display in the Yexi City Museum. Height: 193 cm (or approximately life-size). Photo courtesy of Antonia Finane.



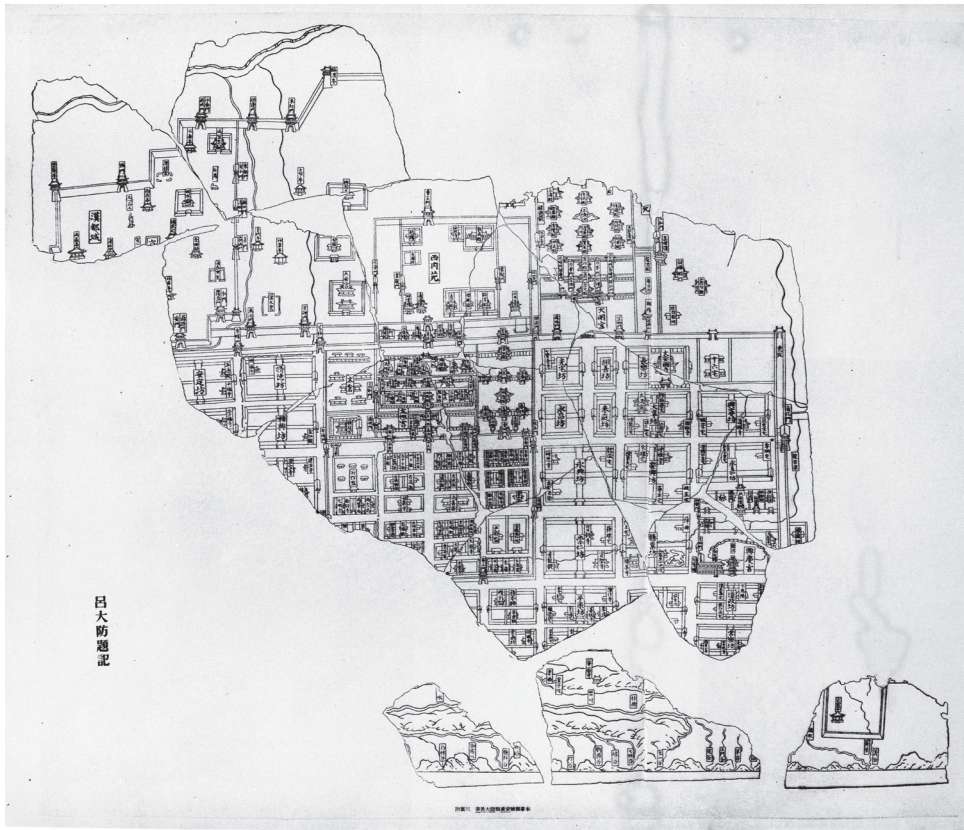
widely read as “texts” by the literate, semiliterate, and illiterate alike. Every visitor to early Chang’an would have been struck by its unique concentration of multistory buildings and high walls that communicated and enhanced supreme power and authority, even without tenements in concrete.²⁵ Spectacles, pageants, and entertainments, both regular and irregular, further distinguished life at the capital from the rest of the major cities; these included animal combat games (Fig. 1.02) and solemn ritual processions of the deceased emperors’ personal effects (Fig. 1.03).²⁶



MAP 1.01 The Guanzhong basin, including Xianyang and Chang'an, the capitals of Qin and Han, respectively.

The high percentage of gardens and parklands attached to palaces and villas was unusual, if not unique, for Han cities. The capital at Chang'an enjoyed abundant water sources, in the form of internal lakes and ponds, rivers and canals, hot springs and wells. No fewer than eight rivers—by some reckonings, ten—and a host of canals supplied clean water to the city, allowing inexpensive transport of goods and people and adding to its beauty (see Map 3.01).²⁷ Numerous gardens and parks were attached to the palaces and noble residences, and some of the grander city wards, at least, sported extensive gardens, orchards, parks, and fields (*yuan*);²⁸ the perimeter wall of Shanglin Park at its greatest extent was purportedly some 400 *li* (roughly 166 km, or 103 mi.) in length. These green spaces would have supplied at least some food for daily life and ritual exchanges, as they did in early Rome. The region's abundant water supplies, when combined with efficient drainage and sewage systems, afforded the sort of urban amenities that only plentiful water can provide. (Only quite recently, however, has there been vague talk of "public baths" in connection with administrative seats in Western Han.)²⁹ Faced with such marvels, the viewer would most likely have considered the larger realm of which he was a part, whether or not he caught a glimpse of the emperor or the members of his court—all the more so because every Western Han authority was trained to regard urban life as the chief instrument of civilization (*jiaohua*), given the assembly of exemplary models gathered there.³⁰ That aura perhaps may explain why early writers of the time discussed the walled capital of the Western Han emperors, who functioned simultaneously as the political, military, and religious heads of state, as a great metropolis rightly commanding attention, as much on its own merits as for

a



b



MAP 1.02 (a) Photograph of fragments ascribed to Lü Dafang's map of Han and Tang Chang'an, which was inscribed on a stone stele erected in 1028 CE. After *Tōhō kōkogaku sōkan*, *kōshu* 4 (1939): fig. 4, which identifies the stele fragments as a "Song inscription of Chang'an city in the Tang," without mentioning Han Chang'an. The fragments, interestingly enough, show the southeastern part of Western Han Chang'an in the fragment's northeastern corner, indicating a strong sense of continued history in the area. This stone stele was formerly in the possession of the Xi'an Beilin (Forest of Steles). Sometime in late Qing or the early republican era, the stele broke into pieces, of which seventeen remained at Beilin. Although a photograph of those remaining pieces was published in a Japanese publication dating from the early war years, the research institute attached to Xi'an Beilin can now locate only a single piece belonging to the stone stele, the rest having disappeared at an unknown date. (b) Line drawing generated from old rubbings and photographs that reproduce the seventeen stele pieces of a rubbing taken in the 1930s. Such line drawings are reproduced in multiple sources, including Hiraoka 1957, map 2 stele.

what its distinctive forms of social organization implied about the capital's relations to the larger realm and outlying areas. With surprising frequency, however, the same early writers failed to distinguish different administrative units of different size (e.g., the greater metropolitan capital region of Guanzhong, the "area within the passes," basically the Wei River Plain, versus Chang'an county or Chang'an city (Map 1.01). Specialist and nonspecialist readers alike will therefore wish to consult the section in this introduction defining the terminology used to indicate these often overlapping units. Many additional maps grace this volume, including the 1080 CE map of Lü Dafang (Map 1.02a–b), at one time reassembled from fragments and stored in the Xi'an Forest of Steles but now unaccountably lost.

Long before Chengdi's reign, the walled palaces rising up from earthen platforms and the wards, as well as the libraries, parklands, markets, and worship sites, conferred undoubted prestige on the privileged members of the governing elite, even as the capital shaped inhabitants' and visitors' sense of themselves, their empire, and their emperor. Three chapters—those by the Roman historian Carlos Noreña; by Tang Xiaofeng, leading historical geographer in the People's Republic of China; and by Huang Yijun, Tang's former student—showcase the cumulative impact exerted by the Western Han capital upon the metropolitan Chang'an region and outlying lands, even as the archaeological record attests subtle continuities over centuries, for example, in the continuing preference for decorative volutes in high-status items, and the ubiquity of jade ornaments.³¹ The surviving records reveal the sheer splendor of above- and belowground residences, which housed artifacts of amazing variety. Hundreds of thousands of mostly unskilled laborers worked on the major building projects in rammed earth undertaken at the capital (during Chengdi's reign, principally at the two imperial mausoleum sites). (Archaeologists have found the laborers' cemeteries near Chang'an.)³² Meanwhile, highly skilled craftsmen inevitably gravitated toward the capital, plying their trades in imperial factories but also in commercial workshops for private patrons.

In all likelihood, the Western Han capital of Chang'an could not have attracted the quantity and quality of sites and artifacts we find there today had three factors not been in place well before Chengdi's reign of twenty-six years: (1) a good highway system, which had been built by Chengdi's predecessors during Qin (221–210 BCE) and Western Han;³³ (2) an immense and effective bureaucracy, which administered the capital and commanderies, by reference to precedents, ruled through internal checks and balances and adjudicated civil and penal laws;³⁴ (3) a knowledge (then unique in the world) of the production methods for silk and lacquer (Fig. 1.04a–b), the two coveted luxury items that largely underwrote the throne's initiatives for centuries, they being heavily taxed, exported to areas as far as Rome, and sold for fabulous sums. (The tax on grain production could not have yielded much surplus, given that a good harvest in antiquity yielded, on average, some 3–4 percent profit on agricultural lands.)³⁵ Major infrastructure and cultural improvements under Han often reflected deliberate decisions by the emperor or his court to curry favor with the locals, high and low. After

a



b

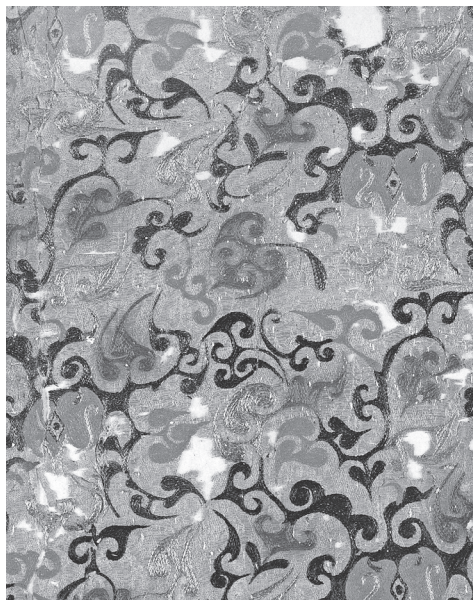


FIG. 1.04 Examples of a (a) lacquer and (b) silk found in the environs of the Western Han capital. The lacquer is reproduced from the *Wenwu*, no. 1 (2010), cover, with permission from Wenwu chubanshe. The Han embroidered silk is reproduced with the kind permission of the director of the Nelson-Atkins Gallery, in Kansas City.

all, such improvements afforded the high-ranking and ambitious opportunities to gain official “merit” through planning and donations, which meant long-term wages for skilled and unskilled laborers, not just employing those on *corvée*. (Of course, historians and archaeologists in the People’s Republic of China have tended to stress the use of convict, *corvée*, and indentured bondservants, for ideologically driven reasons.)³⁶ So while the standard histories are wont to denounce all such projects as “wasteful” and “extravagant,” the projects probably reflected protracted negotiations at court concerning the proper level of benefices owed the Chang’an populations.

Obviously enough, the vast majority of Chengdi’s subjects enjoyed no great wealth or political power. Still, the inhabitants of the capital region, living at the apex of the administrative hierarchy, could expect the dynasty to provide, at a minimum, clean water, fairly priced grain (during shortages), and some limited social services for the elderly and disadvantaged (see the discussion below in this chapter, also Chart 3.01). The capital’s economic system (as that of the larger realm) had long mixed imperial monopolies, factories, infrastructure projects, and boons, on the one hand, and alienable lands, free or alienable labor, and assorted moneymaking ventures, including commercial factories, workshops, and businesses, on the other.³⁷ Unlike Rome, Western Han made little resort to slave labor, though the highest ranking enjoyed possession of their personal attendants.³⁸ Nor did professional standing armies exist in late Western

Han, so far as we know, outside the palace and capital guards, under their respective generals. (Professional armies came after Western Han, in Eastern Han, just as they came later in Roman imperial history.)³⁹ This introduction, along with Zhang Jihai's chapter on the wards, alludes to these topics, despite the paucity of information that currently exists. It is nevertheless worth asking who controlled whom in late Western Han Chang'an, even if the extant sources supply no answers. Were those nominally in power as frightened of collective action undertaken by the masses as their counterparts in Rome? Reports of the Queen Mother healing cult in 3 CE, a decade after Chengdi, not to mention references to children's ditties and other ominous events, suggest surprising volatility for a capital whose ruling house had occupied the throne for some two hundred years and nine reigns.⁴⁰ Could fears account for the provision of welfare services concentrated in the capital and extended to lesser urban centers? A. F. P. Hulsewé went so far as to speak of a "proto-welfare state" in late Western Han, and Lü Simian made nearly the same observation.⁴¹ After all, one anecdote from the reign of Yuandi, Chengdi's father, has the emperor emptying the imperial storehouses to alleviate the distress of those hit by famine.⁴²

As the capital culture was transformed quite dramatically under Chengdi, several chapters highlight some of the main changes that took place then. For example, Jurij Kroll and Hans van Ess discuss two of the leading figures in the reign of Chengdi's father, contributing to the comparatively sudden elevation of Sima Qian's monumental history, *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*), written earlier in the first century BCE, to the status of a model for history.⁴³ And because Chengdi's reign constituted the "high tide" of what scholars are coming to call the "classical turn," when devising the specific policies and projects catalogued here, the court consulted a battery of classicizing and pseudo-archaizing works ascribed to times before 221 BCE, as noted by Mark Csikszentmihalyi in his chapter.⁴⁴ These classicists at court, only a smallish percentage of whom would likely have identified themselves as ethical followers of Kongzi (Confucius), were routinely called upon to provide rhetorical flourishes to court documents, to advise on changes to court rituals and schedules, and to weigh in during policy discussions convened by court ministers and emperors alike.⁴⁵ Nor is it mere coincidence that Chengdi's reign was also the time when the three foremost thinkers of the two Han dynasties—Liu Xiang, Liu Xin, and Yang Xiong—were hard at work collating new collections of writings for the imperial libraries, producing the precursors of the books in all fields of knowledge that we hold in our hands today (Fig. 1.05); when we see the scale of the activist editing going on during the period 26–6 BCE, we realize that many of the texts we routinely identify as pre-Qin texts were substantially reconfigured by and for Chengdi's Western Han court.⁴⁶ Moreover, those same men commanded sufficient expertise in the technical arts (especially astronomy, mathematics, and philology) that all such disciplines were put on a brand-new footing, as Miranda Brown's chapter suggests. Thus the scope and significance of the world making conceived and executed during Chengdi's reign far outweigh that which may be fairly ascribed to the reign of Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE),

contra the “common wisdom” of most China experts.⁴⁷

What does *not* appear in this book is quite as important as what features here. Given the relative infancy of Han studies in the West in comparison with studies of Rome, this volume can provide no more than a brief overview of several issues crucial to the formation of the Western Han capital. Chinese archaeologists and historians have devoted little attention to the subject of provisioning the capital, despite the excavation of one Western Han palace icehouse (see Fig. 3.03) and several granary sites. A later chapter, chapter 3, therefore offers a preliminary sketch of the available evidence for food and water supplies.⁴⁸ Another source of frustration relates to the mural tombs in the Chang'an area studied by Arlen

Lian. Some of the lead excavators of these special tombs, discovered within the last few decades, barely remember anything beyond their hasty initial site reports, so that the earliest murals' precise history, functions, and iconographic readings may continue to elude us; after all, the received literature seldom focuses on building activities of any type, aboveground or below, so we can only live in hope of future archaeological finds. Nor can we confidently date the first wide circulation of key texts (oral or written) or verify the location of such an important site as the Imperial Academy (Taixue) prior to 4 CE; some early texts indicate that the academy had no freestanding building until Wang Mang's own Xin dynasty (9–23 CE), it being before then part and parcel of the ministry for ritual,⁴⁹ under the Commissioner for Ceremonial.

Readers will recall that in Western Han Chang'an, unlike in Rome, there existed no public cult of the emperor, so far as we know, beyond those public parades of imperial effects.⁵⁰ And while Roman historians have long seen depictions of the reigning emperor on statues and coins as the vital visual “glue” binding disparate ethnicities and illiterates to the idea of Romanness, no historians of China to date have proposed a counterpart to that “glue” for the comparable Qin or Han empires (Fig. 1.06a–b), though this author suspects that the ubiquitous presence of the decorative roof tile ends crowning all imperial administrative sites may have functioned as a similar marker of civilized order.⁵¹ The issue of literacy rates, not to mention the complications in calculating rudimentary levels versus the high cultural literacy expected of some members of the governing elite, is still another



FIG. 1.05 Tentatively identified as site of the Tianlu Ge library, with a memorial construction now marking that location. Photograph courtesy of Michael Nylan, taken on the outskirts of present-day Xi'an in the summer of 2012.

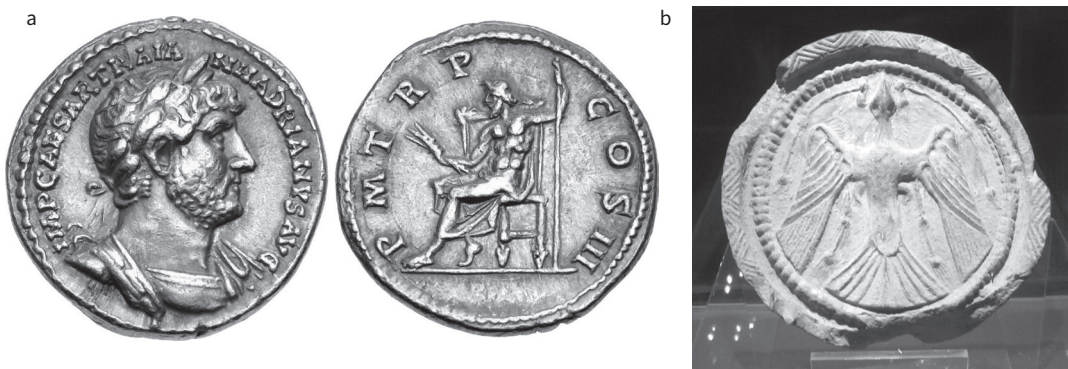


FIG. 1.06 (a) Roman gold coin with the head of the Emperor Hadrian. Reproduced courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group Inc. (lot 64, coin no. 1168). (b) Typical *wadang*, or roof tile end. Photograph by Michael Nylan.

topic that no conscientious Han historian can comfortably evade.⁵² Specialists of Roman history may inquire why so few contributors to this volume refer to Chinese inscriptions of the period, to which the simple answer is, only around 300 inscriptions exist for both Western and Eastern Han, in contrast to the nearly 400,000 generated for Rome and its far-flung empire during imperial times.⁵³ The subject of Western Han Chang'an in post-Han memory is too unwieldy a subject to undertake here, as it includes painting, poetry, essays, and other forms of writing over nearly two millennia.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the editors have decided to reserve treatment of this subject for later publications, given (a) this volume's focus on Chang'an realities, (b) the excellent renditions of *fu* poems provided by David Knechtges's translation of Xiao Tong's *Wenxuan*, and (c) the undeniable fact that post-Han exercises in nostalgia commingle fact and fantasy in such complex ways as to require substantial new studies devoted to single works.⁵⁵

A final word concerning the methodology adopted in this volume: First, all the contributors consistently link textual sources with the most up-to-date archaeological evidence. This allows, within the limits of what is known about the distant past, a more nuanced understanding of historical events and practices in their material settings and institutional contexts. That, in turn, enhances our reading of the textual sources, generating lists of research questions and avenues overlooked in earlier studies on Western Han. Second, the contributors' inquiries have been continually propelled by wider, cross-cultural questions, seeking to elicit first, how Chang'an's urban landscape shaped and was shaped by the local cultures endemic to the area we now call "China," and second, how that Chang'an culture differed from those of other great classical-era capitals, such as Rome and Alexandria. Third, this study approaches Chang'an not merely as a repository of artifacts but as a site carefully constructed, for practical, theoretical, and rhetorical reasons, to impress a series of new orders not only upon those residing within or near its walls but also upon those living within and beyond the borders of the Western Han empire.⁵⁶

Specialized Terminology for the Study of Western Han Chang'an

Traditional Chinese accounts define the “capital” as the site where a ruler had his own residence and his ancestral shrines.⁵⁷ Newcomers to the field need to refer continually to highly specialized vocabulary, just as did Chinese readers in the early, middle, and early modern periods. The following terms will be used consistently throughout the rest of the book:

GUANZHONG 關中, also called “the area within the passes,” which consists of the Wei River plain, a basin ringed by mountains. The term, inherited from Qin, the short-lived dynasty that preceded Western Han and unified the empire, is sometimes said to be the territories lying between Long Pass on the west, Hangu Pass on the east, Wu Pass and Yao Pass on the south, and Xiao Pass to the north (see Map I.01 and compare to Map 3.02). Of course, a number of other passes were built after Qin’s unification in 221 BCE, including Ziwu Pass to the south, so they become relevant to the definition in time. Guanzhong was considered the “upper reaches” of the rest of the world, as the basin was surrounded by mountains. To the south are the highest mountain ranges (esp. Qinling and Zhongnan), along which the Wei River flows; to the west is the Longshan range; and to the north is Qishan, and also other mountains that are not as high as Qinling or Longshan, but high enough to impress and to represent barriers. Guanzhong for these reasons has often been called the “area fast within the barriers on all four sides” (*si sai zhi gu* 四塞之固).

CHANG'AN CITY 長安城 refers to the area within the city perimeter walls, under the supervision of the Chang'an (City) Magistrate, or Ling 令. A high official named Colonel of the City Gates was responsible for security at Chang'an's twelve city gates; other troops were under the command of the Commissioner of the Guards. In addition, other high-ranking military officers, including the Palace Commandant and the Commissioner of the Palace, were to ensure peace and order within the palaces.

CHANG'AN COUNTY 長安縣 refers to the area under the Chang'an County Magistrate, which includes the area within the city perimeter walls and the suburbs just outside but does not include any of the imperial mausoleum towns, which are under their own jurisdictions as separate counties.

GREATER METROPOLITAN CHANG'AN is a modern rubric to refer to the counties under the Governor of the Capital, or Jingzhao Yin.⁵⁸

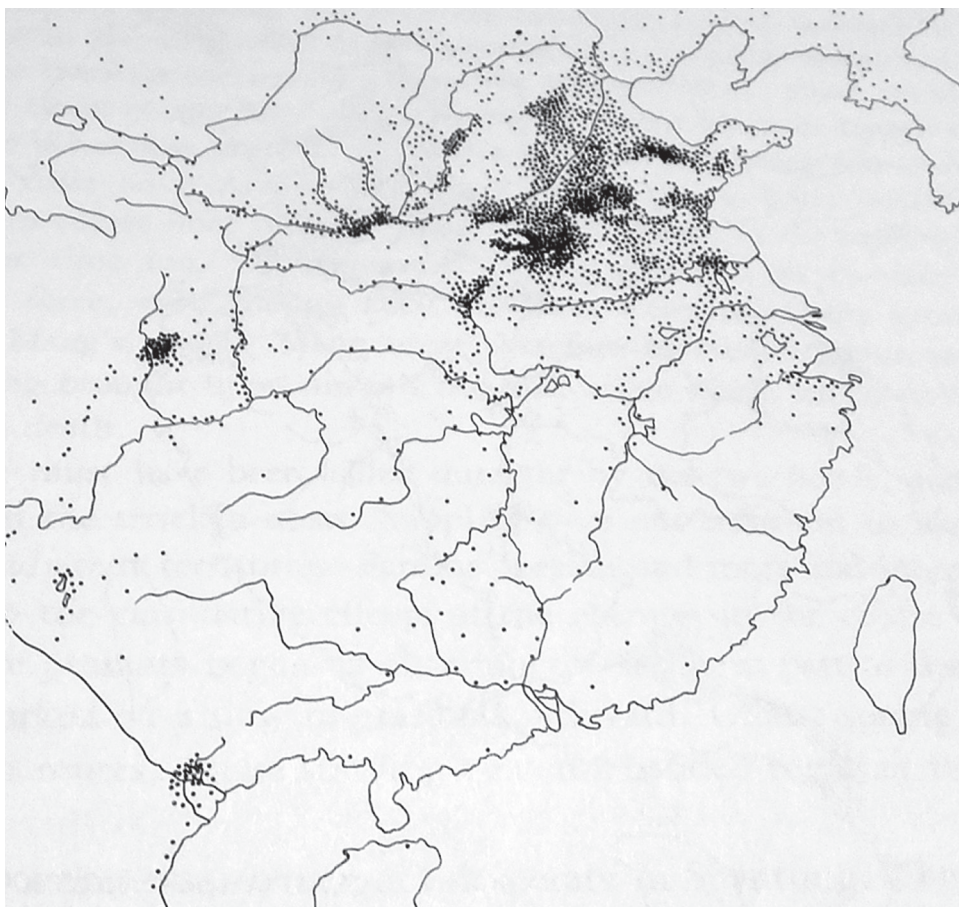
GREATER METROPOLITAN CHANG'AN REGION, another modern rubric, refers to what the Chinese sources call the Sanfu 三輔 (Three Supports), that is, the area under the three parallel offices of the Governor of the Capital, the Zuopingyi 左馮翊 and the Youfufeng 右扶風.⁵⁹ For most of Western Han, public security for this region was the responsibility of the

Colonel of Internal Security, though Chengdi in 10 BCE abolished the post.⁶⁰ Troops for the Three Supports region were the responsibility of the three Metropolitan Area Commandants, who also had concurrent jurisdiction over such nearby commanderies as Hongnong.⁶¹ These high-ranking officers' overlapping responsibilities suggest first, the uniquely pressing need for security in the capital region, where so many nobles, officials, and sources of wealth were concentrated, and second, the throne's understandable unwillingness to see all of its troops under a single command.

FIVE CAPITALS (Wu Du 五都) refers to the great cities from the pre-imperial era: Luoyang (present-day Henan); Handan, capital of the old Zhao kingdom (present-day Hebei); Linzi, capital first of the old Qi kingdom and later of Qi Commandery (present-day Shandong);⁶² Wan, capital of Nanyang Commandery (present-day Henan); and Chengdu, capital first of the old Shu kingdom and then of Shu Commandery (present-day Sichuan). Initially, these Five Capitals, along with Xianyang, last capital of the Qin kingdom and only capital of the short-lived Qin empire, rivaled Western Han Chang'an in size and economic importance, given their favorable locations and long-standing mercantile interests.

TRAVELING PALACE (*li gong* 離宮 or *xing gong* 行宮) is yet another term that nonspecialists may find puzzling. The emperor's formal place of residence in the capital was called the "palace proper" (*zheng gong* 正宮); for nearly all of Western Han, the "palace proper" meant the Weiyang Palace complex. An emperor might stay at so-called traveling palaces for long periods of time (as did Han Wudi at the Sweet Springs and Jianzhang Palaces), but only one palace could be considered his permanent residence. As a result, even other palaces inside the city walls (e.g., Cassia Palace, Northern Palace) were dubbed "traveling palaces" (meaning, not the main residence), along with palaces at some distance from the capital. How differently Western Han emperors used the monumental architecture of Chang'an city and Chang'an county, not to mention the hundreds of traveling palaces scattered through Guanzhong, is a research topic not taken up before this volume, except by students of the epideictic *fu*.

Timing matters to good historians. In this volume, "late Western Han" refers to the reigns of Yuandi (Chengdi's father), Chengdi, and the interval of Aidi and Pingdi from 7 BCE to 9 CE, before Wang Mang founded his own Xin dynasty. "Mid-Western Han" begins circa 100 BCE (i.e., midreign for Han Wudi) and then continues for the reigns of Zhaodi and Xuandi (i.e., up to 48 BCE). In hindsight, events and trends did not neatly align with dynastic reigns, but these are useful divisions nonetheless. Also, as timing matters, this volume adopts Michael Loewe's system of titles throughout (rather than Hucker's), with one exception: it replaces "Gentleman" with "Courtier," since the former



MAP 1.03 Population density based on registered households (not the entire population). After Bielenstein 1947, map 1, itself based on Han maps in Tan Qixiang 1982–87, vol. 2. Image courtesy of Cambridge University Press, which reproduced this image in Bielenstein, “The Restoration of the Han Dynasty,” in *CHOC*, map 10.

seems to convey little of the specific duties of the Lang to American nonspecialists.⁶³

Before proceeding, perhaps a word or two of caution. The Western Han empire that made its capital at Chang’an was not all that much like Rome, despite commanding capital regions and empires that were comparable in size and equally populous.⁶⁴ First, Chang’an did not build primarily in stone like Rome, but rather in rammed earth and wood. Second, the two greatest classical-era empires ran on entirely different bases: in Chang’an, battlefield victories seldom translated directly into political power; the army was composed largely of conscripts, rather than mercenaries; the imperial cult worshipped dead emperors, rather than living ones;⁶⁵ and Western Han emperors came to display themselves on set occasions less and less over time, rather than more often. Nowhere in the Western Han empire was the local economy primarily slave-based, in contrast to the Mediterranean world, where slaves accounted for an estimated 15 per-

cent of the total population (Map 1.03).⁶⁶ And while the Roman empire incorporated several ancient civilizations that were initially much more literate than Rome itself, the Western Han capital city, which undoubtedly served as the center of literary production for all of East Asia, witnessed several different reimaginings of its own role in relation to its impressive cultural heritage.

At the same time, all empires in the preindustrial period faced similar technological and logistical constraints. Transport overland in Western Han was as prohibitively expensive as in the Roman empire (if anything, more so, given the Han capital's landlocked status), where the exponential rises in prices for commodities hauled overland meant that stores for the grain dole were cheaper to bring by sea from Egypt, Spain, or Sicily than from farms on the Italian peninsula 100 kilometers away from Rome.⁶⁷ (Latifundia near Rome therefore turned to producing luxury items, manufactured goods, handicrafts, and perishable fruits and vegetables, and that was probably true of the rich suburbs of Chang'an as well.)⁶⁸ A single contemporary account provides a rough idea of transportation costs in the early empires in China: the short-lived Qin empire figured transport fees for grain measures delivered overland from the capital to the northern frontiers roughly 600 kilometers away at a ratio of 192:1.⁶⁹ (Grain prices naturally fluctuated during times of unrest at the borders and following natural disasters, as Table 1.01 and Chart 1.01 suggest.)

Chang'an City and Environs

By mid- to late Western Han, the immediate Chang'an metropolitan area boasted well over a million residents; greater metropolitan Chang'an and the immediate suburban counties, an estimated two million.⁷⁰ By one reckoning, the "area within the passes," centered on the three metropolitan districts of greater Chang'an, commanded roughly three-tenths of the population of sixty million for the Western Han empire, but possibly boasted as much as six-tenths of the empire's total wealth.⁷¹ But perhaps more importantly, in the Roman empire no city, with the possible exception of Alexandria (Egypt), ever commanded anything like the resources concentrated in the city of Rome, whereas the Western Han capital of Chang'an was expressly designed to outshine a great many large, wealthy, and populous cities in its own empire, especially the Five Capitals from the pre-Qin era listed above. Ergo, the Han policy that created a strict hierarchy for cities and towns, by which the capital stood out clearly above the capitals of kingdoms and commanderies and the county-level administrative seats, for which the capital supposedly served as supreme model.⁷²

The remains of the old Chang'an capital city lie 3 kilometers northwest of present-day Xi'an (Shaanxi Province). The main outlines of Chang'an city and its environs are well established, thanks to excavations conducted between 1949 and 2010 that uncovered 5,300 major sites, each comprising multiple tombs or foundations of aboveground structures. (One Chang'an archaeologist recently spoke of personally "excavating"

TABLE I.01 Grain prices and inflation during Western and Eastern Han

EMPEROR	LOWEST PRICE, SAME GRAIN UNIT (EXPRESSED IN CASH)	HIGHEST PRICE, SAME GRAIN UNIT (EXPRESSED IN CASH)	DISCREPANCY	SOURCE OF DATA
Western Han				
Wendi	10–30	500	Factor of 15+	<i>Taiping yulan</i> 35/4a; <i>Fengsu tongyi</i> 2/9b
Wudi	30–80	No records	Cannot be calculated	<i>Shiji</i> 129.3257
Xuandi	5	100+	Factor of 20+	<i>Hanshu</i> 8.259, 69.2979
Yuandi	100+	200–500	Factor of up to 5	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 2/5b; <i>Hanshu</i> 79.3296
Wang Mang	2,000	10,000	Factor of 10+	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 18/1a; <i>Hanshu</i> 99A.3936
Eastern Han				
Guangwu	1,200–10,000	Several “tens of thousands”	Factor of 10–30	<i>Taiping yulan</i> , <i>juan</i> 840/15b
Mingdi	30	No records	Cannot be calculated	<i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 2/5a; <i>Hou Hanshu</i> 41.1395 (notes)
Zhangdi	More than 1,000	170,000–180,000	Factor of 70–80	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 86.2847; <i>Dongguan Hanji</i> 18/10a
Andi	20 or 30 to as much as 2,000	“More than ten thousand”	Factor 100+	<i>Jin shi cuibian</i> 2/3b; <i>Hou Hanshu</i> 10.237, 87.2886
Shundi	100	“Several thousands”	Factor of 20–30+	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 86.2841
Lingdi	500–700	10,000	Factor of 12+	<i>Lishi</i> 3/26a, 4/11a; <i>Hou Hanshu</i> 86.2847
Xiandi	30 to “several ten thousand”	100,000–500,000	Factor of up to 100 or more	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 9.376, 73.2354; <i>Taiping yulan</i> , <i>juan</i> 845/8a, 859/5b

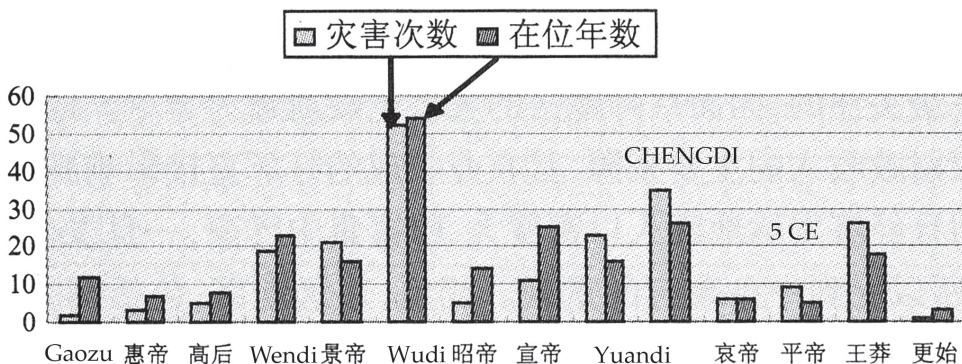


CHART I.01 Number of natural disasters during the reigns of the Western Han emperors and Wang Mang. Two bars appear for every emperor: the lighter bar, on the left, indicates the total number of disasters per reign; the darker bar, on the right, indicates years of a given emperor’s reign. During Chengdi’s reign, the reported disasters outnumbered the years of his reign (equally true of the much admired Jingdi). After Wang Wentao 2007, 42.

a

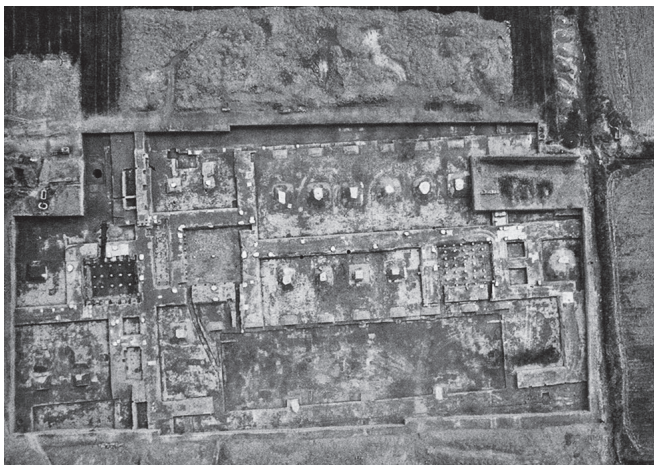
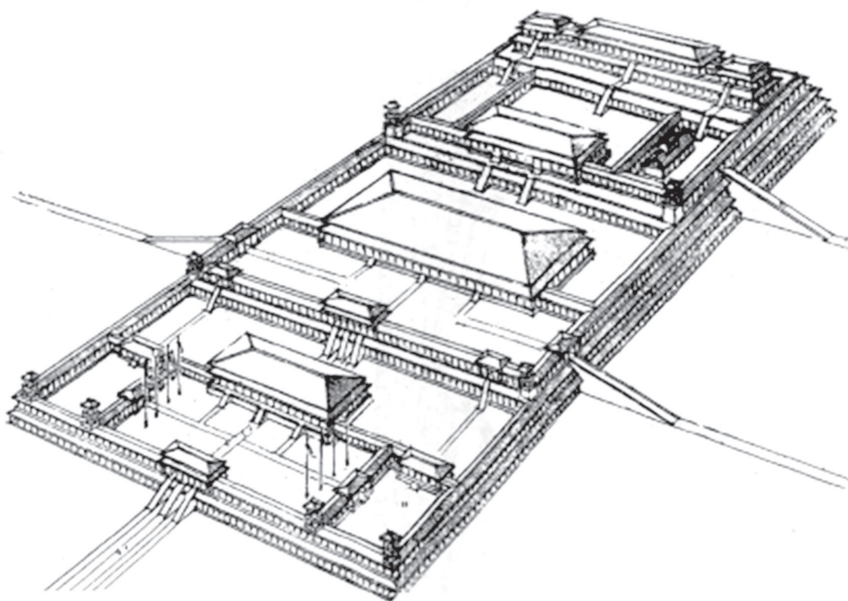


FIG. 1.07 (a) Aerial view of postholes at Weiyang Palace excavation site, once identified as the Shaofu (Privy Treasury) and now believed to have been a residence for palace administrators or staff. (b) Line drawing reconstruction of the Front Audience Hall of the Weiyang Palace complex. Image of the Weiyang Palace excavation site is reprinted from *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (1992): back cover and fig. 1.

b

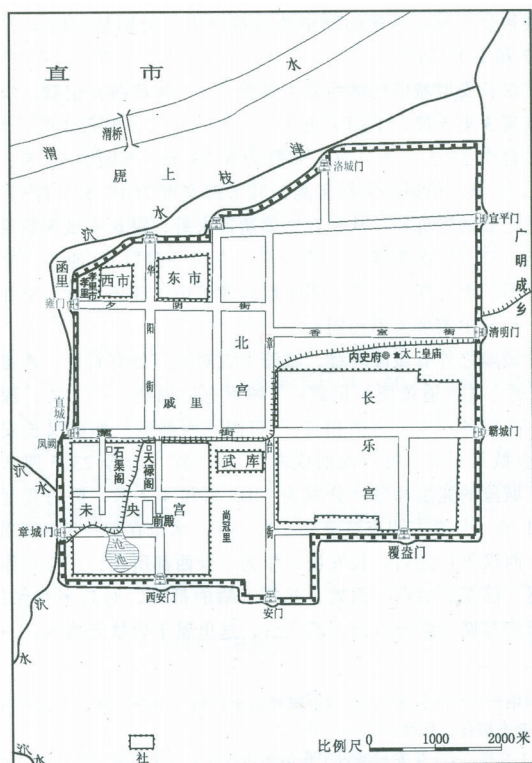


more than 2,000 tombs in 2010, though it is unclear what nonstop “excavation” could mean in such situations, aside from salvage archaeology.⁷³ That said, surprisingly little work has gone into reconstructing any aspect of urban life in Western Han Chang’an, aside from sketching the approximate outlines of the monumental palace complexes, perhaps because wooden architecture and rammed-earth foundations have left few enduring traces, except for postholes marking palace, temple, factory, and residence sites (Fig. 1.07a–b);⁷⁴ also because most Chinese archaeologists are still primarily interested in sumptuous luxury items tied to people and events known from history and legend (as their Western counterparts once were).⁷⁵

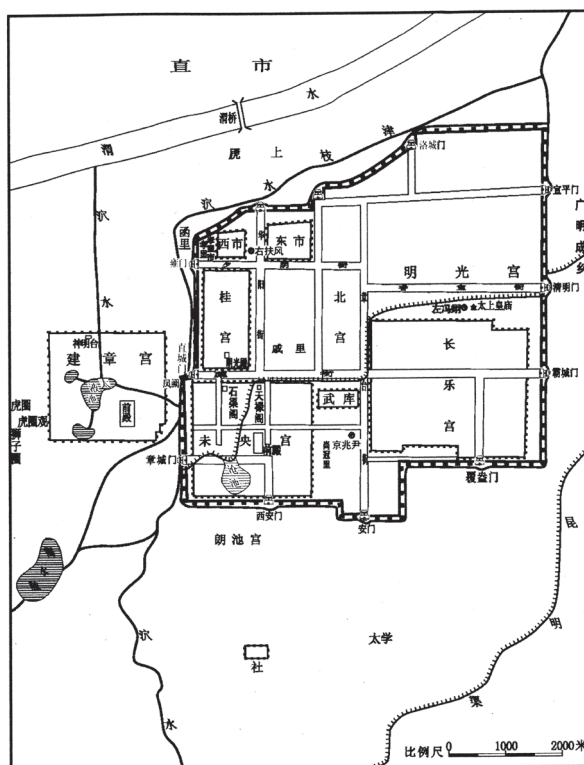
When looking either at old plans of the city or at modern images of the major archaeological sites (see Fig. 1.01), the observer is struck immediately by four features of Han Chang'an: the size of the city; the density and prominence of its walled enclosures; the dominance of the palace structures within the city; and the density of cult sites surrounding the city. The capital Chang'an was built in three main stages, we know. It began to be built even before the Western Han founder had assumed nominal control as emperor in 202 BCE, for an impressive capital was the best advertisement for the new regime, as the first Han Chancellor, Xiao He, realized. An impressive city it was, though some part of its scale and grandeur, not to mention the speed with which it went up, was made possible by the survival of Qin foundations and palaces after the dynastic transfer. The Changle Palace complex was built on the site of a Qin traveling palace, the Xingle Palace, on the outskirts of the Qin capital of Xianyang, and the Front Audience Hall in the Weiyang Palace complex took advantage of some of the foundations associated with the extensive Epang Palace foundations in Shanglin Park, built south of the Wei River by Qin Shihuang (r. 221–210 BCE), as well as the older Zhang Terrace.⁷⁶ Suffice it to say that an expert on Western Han Chang'an says, "All of the Han palaces were probably built on the foundations of the old Qin traveling palaces."⁷⁷

Scholars through the ages have tended, for simplicity's sake, to treat the capital at Chang'an as if it were a stable and unchanging site, since it was surrounded by perimeter walls by the end of Huidi's reign. But there were significant internal changes to the built environment, as a comparison of three dated maps shows (Fig. 1.08a–c). For instance, during the reign of Han Wudi we see major palace complexes springing up outside the city, most importantly, the Jianzhang Palace in Shanglin Park. In addition, an immense Mingguang Palace was constructed in the eastern part of the city. A comparison of Wudi's Chang'an city circa 87 BCE with Chang'an city shortly after Chengdi's death attests to retrenchment on several fronts: for instance, the Mingguang Palace has mysteriously disappeared, at least in one map.⁷⁸ And were these maps to trace the shifting boundaries of Shanglin Park (see Map 4.01),⁷⁹ we would also see the effect of Chengdi's decision to shrink his fabled pleasure park, so as to give part of it over to local farmers to cultivate. Later still, by 4–5 CE, a new set of structures was built south of the city: the ritual cult sites where the imperial suburban sacrifices were to be carried out, in the emperor's name on behalf of his subjects, making good on a proposal advanced in Chengdi's era.⁸⁰

The three maps given in Figure 1.08—the most precise yet generated in the scholarly literature—give no idea of the considerable internal changes within the walled palace and market structures. For example, Chengdi's apartments, refurbished during his reign, supposedly sported the soft gray Lantian jade for the walls. Still more gorgeously, Chengdi's favorite apartments in the Zhaoyang Audience Hall had windows of green glass (Roman?),⁸¹ gilt inlay doors and railings, jade beds, jade stools, and so on. The last word in luxury, this set of apartments was likened to "a fairyland."⁸² Such detailed literary and archaeological evidence, ironically enough, has not prevented scholars from



a



b

debating the most basic questions of layout and orientation of Western Han Chang'an.⁸³ Specialists may want to delve into some of these disputes, but, for the moment, it suffices to keep in mind just how different the Western Han capital was from all later imperial capitals in Chinese history, including Luoyang, capital of the Eastern Han dynasty, since all the others reflected a stricter north-south orientation, as noted in Tang Xiaofeng's chapter.⁸⁴

The city measured 35 square kilometers (almost the same size as Manhattan). The city by 190 BCE had strong perimeter walls, extending on all four sides for 25,700 meters, remains of which are visible today (Fig. 1.09).⁸⁵ Within the city walls, eight major thoroughfares connected with twelve gates (three to a side), while a host of alleys and lanes threaded through the residential wards, before directing travelers out to the new imperial highway system that made Chang'an the main hub of all east-west communications throughout the realm (see Map 1.04a-b; cf. Map 3.05).⁸⁶ Within the capital proper, three lanes divided each of the eight main thoroughfares, with the center lane strictly reserved for imperial carriages, a feature known as *chidao*. Nine *mo* (intersections?)⁸⁷ may have represented the nodal points where one could cross over the center reserved lane without fear of breaking the laws, but the sources are unclear on this point. The received texts speak of evergreens lining the sides of the main thoroughfares at regular intervals, and this, among other features known to us—especially the major

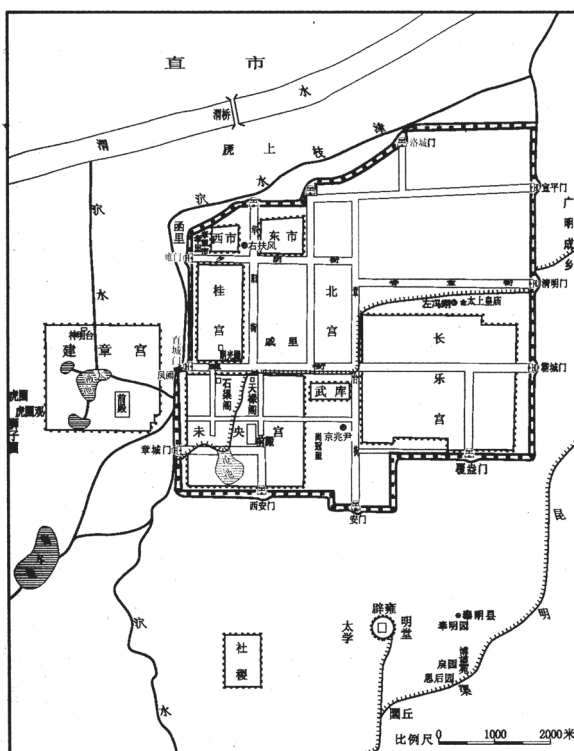


FIG. 1.08 Three views of Western Han Chang'an, in different reigns, dating to (a) 190 BCE, (b) 87 BCE, and (c) 5 BCE. Note the abrupt appearance and disappearance of the Mingguang Palace in these images—a problem that Liu Rui's revised palace plan (Fig. 1.11) obviates. All images reproduced from Wang Shejiao 2008, 16, 22, 27, with permission from the author.

ivers in the city environs and the ponds strategically placed within the palace complexes—would have made Chang'an an early example of a “green city.”⁸⁸ (The suburbs, of course, would have been greener still, as it was to them that the cartloads of the city's night soil would have been dispatched daily, for use as fertilizer.)⁸⁹

Water, not to mention drains and sewage, may not strike newcomers to urban history as exciting topics, but they would do well to recall that visitors to Rome in the first century BCE were not particularly impressed with Rome's magnificent buildings but with its “aqueducts, paved roads, and the construction of sewers”—that is, with the luxuries and health benefits associated with a surfeit of water.⁹⁰ Similarly, in the case of Han Chang'an, the early sources describe at great length the various ponds in Shanglin Park and within the Han capital walls, the most famous being Kunming Pond (for Shanglin, see Map 4.01; for Kunming, Map 3.02). Kunming Pond was reportedly large enough that naval games enacted between multistoried seagoing vessels could be launched on its waters. (Again, such spectacles bring Rome to mind.)

The city itself was composed of three major parts: (1) the administrative and palace precincts; (2) the markets; and (3) the 160 walled residential wards, which were further subdivided into 800 administrative subunits (see Zhang Jihai's chapter).⁹¹ By Chengdi's era, the palaces within the city walls, the biggest being Changle and Weiyang in the south, covered close to two-thirds of the city inside the perimeter wall. The encl-

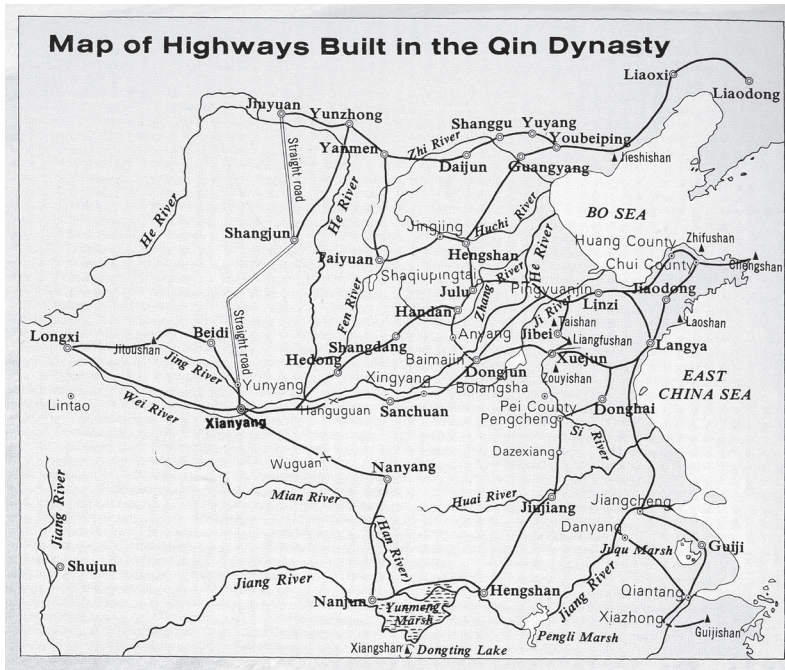


FIG. 1.09 Remains of the perimeter walls of Western Han Chang'an at the Ba Cheng Gate, built of rammed earth, or *hangtu*. There are plans to save this site, but whether those plans come to fruition remains to be seen. Photographs by Michael Nylan, 2010.

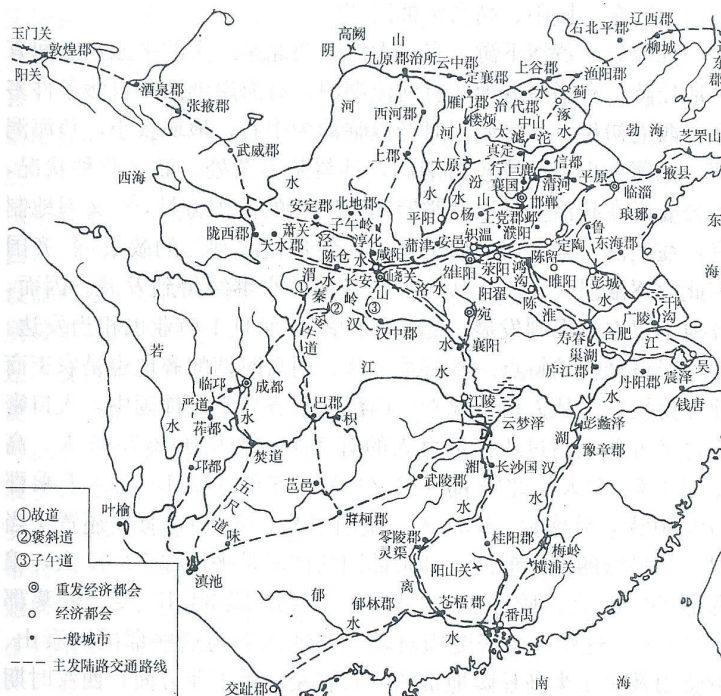
sure walls built around the palaces eventually stretched 22 kilometers. Notably, the Changle and Weiyang palace complexes (eventually assigned to the emperor and the dowager empress) were linked by elevated, covered passageways permitting free and private communication to select members of the governing elite. Serving the palaces was a Chang'an arsenal of enormous size occupying some 23 hectares (an area slightly larger than the Boston Common). The arsenal's location, wedged between the Changle and Weiyang Palaces, permitted easy access and the double protection afforded by the nested palace and arsenal perimeter walls. Several granaries serving the palaces were either attached to those palaces or within easy distance along water routes (see Nylan's chapter on supplying the city).⁹² Substantial factories were moreover found within the palace precincts. Indeed, recent excavations have revealed an industrial complex under imperial management that comprised twenty-one potters' kilns producing gifts and tomb figurines for the imperial tombs (like those found at the Yangling), an iron foundry, a workshop minting coins, and possibly a lacquer factory as well.⁹³ The decision to locate factories inside the palace precincts, despite the obvious risk of fire to wooden buildings, was apparently motivated by the Western Han court's desire to monopolize the production of some necessities for use within the palace and administrative precincts or in diplomatic exchanges.⁹⁴ According to a rough figure supplied in contemporary sources, the central government dedicated one-third of its annual wealth for gifts and one-third for tomb building and imperial sacrifices, fully as much as for the administration of the realm.⁹⁵

In 1986, in the Han Chang'an northwest city sector, archaeologists found remains of the Western Market (first built in 189 BCE) and, later, also those of the slightly larger Eastern Market. Market supervision was strong and extended to strict price controls.

a



b



MAP 1.04 (a) Qin dynasty's road network. (b) The transport network during Western Han. Both images reproduced from Weichao Yu 1997, 72, fig. 76, with permission from Wenwu Press. This network of roads was further extended during Han times, but maps showing the major trade routes are largely conjectural outside of the Chang'an area. For the main Han roads radiating from the Chang'an area, see Map 3.05.

The “Treatise on Food and Money” in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) reports that the Han market officials in every season ascertained the highest and lowest prices, to ensure that none was outrageous.⁹⁶ That suggests that the market officials must have generated and regularly consulted extensive archives, although archaeologists have found no trace of these to date. Chinese scholarship has tended to focus on four main issues relating to these markets: (1) Were the markets closed shut? (2) How many entrances did the markets have? (3) Were the markets square or rectangular in shape? and (4) What were the roads like that ran through the markets? Recent excavations have answered all those questions: there were eight gates to each market (two per side); both markets operated from dawn to dusk; the markets were more nearly square, with two roads running through them.⁹⁷ But enough data now exists to ask, for the first time, Who were the principal customers for these markets? Were they the rank and file of Chang’an city or county residents, or mainly employees of the palace and administrative precincts in the capital, that is, the palace officials, the ladies of the back palace harems, and servants? Archaeology suggests that the Chang’an palaces probably included residences for thousands of such employees,⁹⁸ and we know the markets sold prepared foods, in an antique version of take-out. Then, too, the imperially reviewed *Taiping yulan* (*Encyclopedia of the Taiping Era*, comp. 984) preserves an early fragment of a text that claims that “merchants lived there [in the markets],”⁹⁹ which would allow double duty for the most crammed of the urban spaces (Fig. 1.10).¹⁰⁰ If we can extrapolate from such materials as a Sichuan tomb tile from the Eastern Han period,¹⁰¹ then perhaps merchants lived over permanent or semipermanent stalls and shops, which in turn would suggest that only a few merchants were licensed to sell in the two main Chang’an markets.

Modern scholars speculate that private residences near the palace precincts and markets were monitored and licensed as well, but startlingly little has been said about the 160 wards in which most of the Chang’an city populace lived and worked—wards whose walls were surmounted with watchtowers and whose gates were closed at night, with sentries posted by each gate. Given the ratio of palace complexes to extrapalatial space within the city, at first glance it seems unlikely that in 2 CE Chang’an county would have had more than 80,000 registered households and 246,200 persons: Why, when the average ratio of households to persons was 1:5 elsewhere in the empire, was the ratio closer to 1:3 in and near the capital city?¹⁰² And how many of the registered Chang’an county households could possibly have fit within the capital’s perimeter walls, even if we presume that the administrative and palace precincts included residences for nobles (many with prisons attached), dormitories for officials of senior and junior rank, and barracks for the guards and jailers in Chang’an city?¹⁰³ (That such small-size households are not believed to represent the norm in preindustrial Mediterranean societies is noteworthy, but not necessarily problematic, given the very different sort of early empire fashioned in China.)¹⁰⁴

Debates over these very questions loom large in several chapters in this volume. Yang Kuan (1936–2005 CE) was but the most prominent scholar to register doubts as



FIG. 1.10 Sichuan pictorial stone, a photograph of which was given to Michael Nylan in 2001 by Sichuan archaeologists. This pictorial stone corresponds to one reproduced in Gong, Gong, and Dai, *Ba Shu Handai huaxiang ji*, fig. 29 (n.p.), identified as coming from Guanghan, but not specified as either “excavated” or “unprovenanced.”

to whether so many wards would have fitted inside the Chang'an city perimeter walls, given the enormous size of the palace complexes, which likely were more minimally inhabited. Zhang Jihai's chapter in this volume suggests a solution, assuming the figures for the registered population of Chang'an county in 2 CE (those figures reflecting Chengdi's reign, apparently) to be relatively accurate for Chang'an county and its environs during that reign.¹⁰⁵ Previous estimates for the ratio of resident households per ward, ranging from a low of twenty-five to a high of one hundred, may be off on either end; in any case, there was no mandated number of households per ward, as the Western Han texts themselves describe single wards having as few as twelve households and up to more than two hundred households per ward.¹⁰⁶ And, if we accept Liu Rui's reconstruction of Western Han Chang'an, which tallies well with earlier research (Fig. 1.11), the space occupied by the Changle palace complex merges with that of the Mingguang, allowing still more of that registered population to fit into those Chang'an city wards.¹⁰⁷

What has never been in question is the extreme luxury of Chang'an's imperial palaces and noble homes, given literary records like the “Western Metropolis” *fu* and “Western Capital” *fu*, or the excavated pottery models like the one from Laodaosi, in the Chang'an area (Fig. 1.12a–b).¹⁰⁸ That said, we mostly still rely upon the received literary tradition for its descriptions of the architectural details and decorations inside the palaces:

There were carved columns of jade pedestals,
Decorated brackets with cloud-patterned crossbeams,
A triple staircase and a tiered balustrade,
Engraved railings with figured edging.

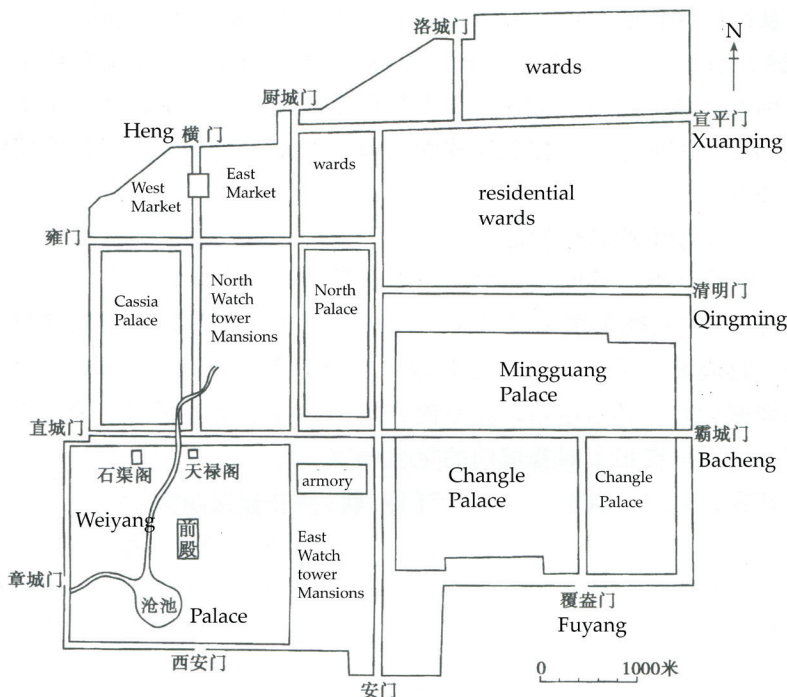


FIG. 1.11 Ground plan of Western Han Chang'an. Reproduced with the author's permission from Liu Rui 2011, 25.

On the right was a ramp, on the left was a staircase
 Blue was the door-engraving; red was the floor.

.
 Gilt paving stones, jade-decorated staircases
 Vermilion courtyards shone with a fiery glow.¹⁰⁹

Note the emphasis on color. The use of strong mineral colors was prized in early civilizations, in large part, presumably, because it screamed wealth. No one has as yet undertaken the enormous task of listing and creating typologies for the entire range of excavated artifacts—the drawings, murals, pictorial bricks and stones, as well as the small models found in tombs, not to mention texts and inscriptions—in preparation for critical analysis.¹¹⁰ We have no digital reconstructions of the Western Han (as opposed to Tang) Chang'an buildings and cityscapes, such as exist for Rome in abundance (though some websites are currently under construction), nor do we have anything akin to the *Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae* (LTUR) published in 1999, which has revolutionized the Roman field.¹¹¹ That said, recent excavations in the modern Xi'an area allow us to say far more than we could before. Excavations at the Qin Xianyang Palace 3 site (Figs. 1.14a–c)¹¹² have proven particularly helpful, insofar as they have yielded enough aboveground mural fragments that we can now confidently

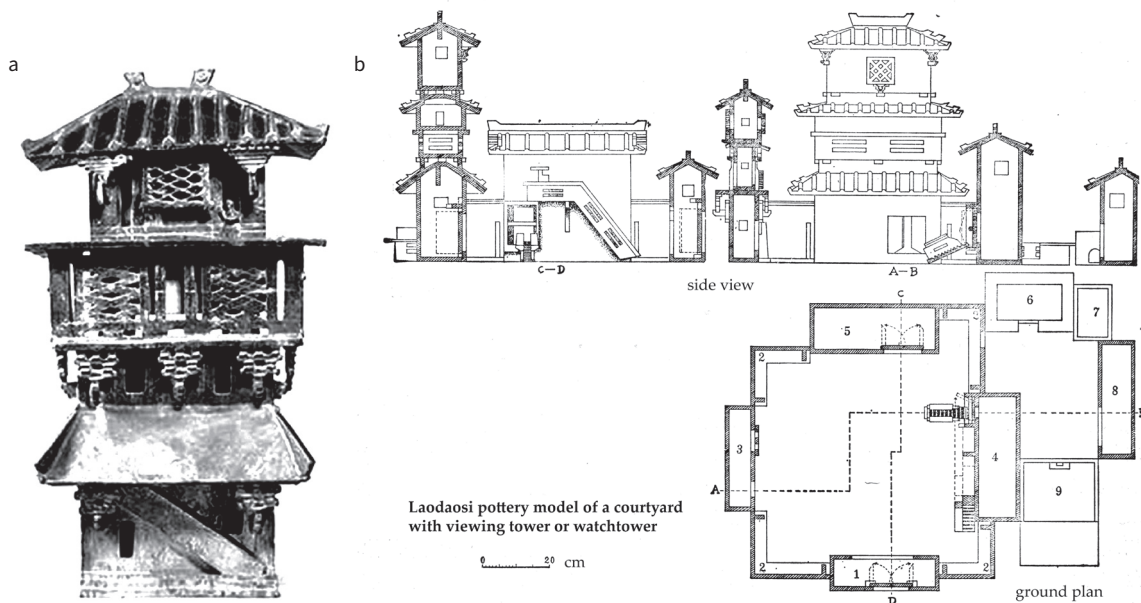


FIG. 1.12 (a) Green-glazed pottery model of a tower (*lou*) found at Laodaosi, in Mian county, south of the Qinling Mountains. (b) Plan view and cross-section of the same pottery model of a manor house from Laodaosi. Such models give us our best idea of how the fabled towergates looked in Han Chang'an, as their roofs sport decorative roof tile ends. Both these images correspond to Guo Qinghua 1985, fig. 6, and are reproduced with permission from Wenwu chubanshe.

assert the similarities between the Qin palace decorations and those from the Western Han Chang'an and Weiyang palace sites, and hence the similarities between above- and belowground conventions of paintings. (Those Han-era fragments can be viewed by specialists, but as Chinese archaeologists have not yet published the images of them, they cannot be reproduced here.)

The level of artistry in luxury goods, like the level of sophistication in Chang'an's economic institutions, was on a par with or better than elsewhere in the classical world, including Rome.¹¹³ Among the most spectacular finds made in the Chang'an area within the last twenty years are a splendid mural of a horse carriage; murals of the night sky with constellations and others showing men and women seated at a banquet (especially important for gender history);¹¹⁴ and green-glazed pottery produced in imitation of bronze vessels with verdigris. Lacquers and silks in particular fed the local economy (see Fig. 1.04), with few slaves in the production line.¹¹⁵ Many of the objects featured in this volume display great beauty (as do the line drawings from the mural tombs), suggesting that the tomb occupants were members of the governing elite, if not, perhaps, the highest-ranking officials and nobles lucky enough to be granted the privilege of attending the Han emperors in their mausoleum complexes.¹¹⁶ For it is becoming ever more obvious that the gorgeous mural tombs so attractive to the modern eye may not have belonged to the very highest-ranking members of Western Han society. Some

a



b

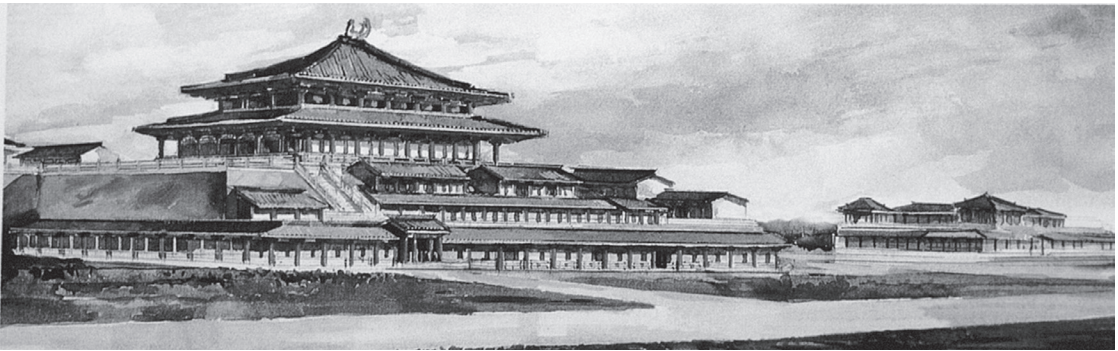


FIG. 1.13 Comparison between palace architecture in Rome and early imperial China: (a) Reconstruction by Jacques Carlu, in 1924, of the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill; Carlu's reconstruction used the probable bright colors of Augustan times. Cf. *Roma Antiqua, envois degli architetti francesi 1788–1824* (Paris: École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1986), 62, fig. 24. More recent reconstructions—notably Packer 1997 and Meneghini and Valenzani 2007—emphasize color in similar ways. (b) The “imagined” Epang Palace in the Chang'an area, generated during the Mao era by politicized archaeologists. Although this image comes from a 1970s postcard, a similar reconstruction can be found in more recent scholarly books—for example, in Xu Weimin's authoritative *Qin Han ducheng yanjiu* (2012), 62—which ignore the fact that only the foundations for the Epang Palace were ever built.

time ago, the senior archaeologist Jiang Yingju suggested in a pathbreaking paper that the highest-ranking tombs in Western and Eastern Han had silk hangings on the wall, rather than the less costly painted murals or pictorial stones, and Jiang's hypotheses has been borne out in the family cemetery of the Chancellor and noble Zhang Anshi.¹¹⁷

Cemeteries and ritual sites were almost always situated outside the walls, the one major exception being the Temple to Gaozu inside the capital city walls, near the south of the Changle palace complex. The location and frequency of visits to cult sites, duly noted in the sources, allow us to begin reconstructing the differing uses to which various

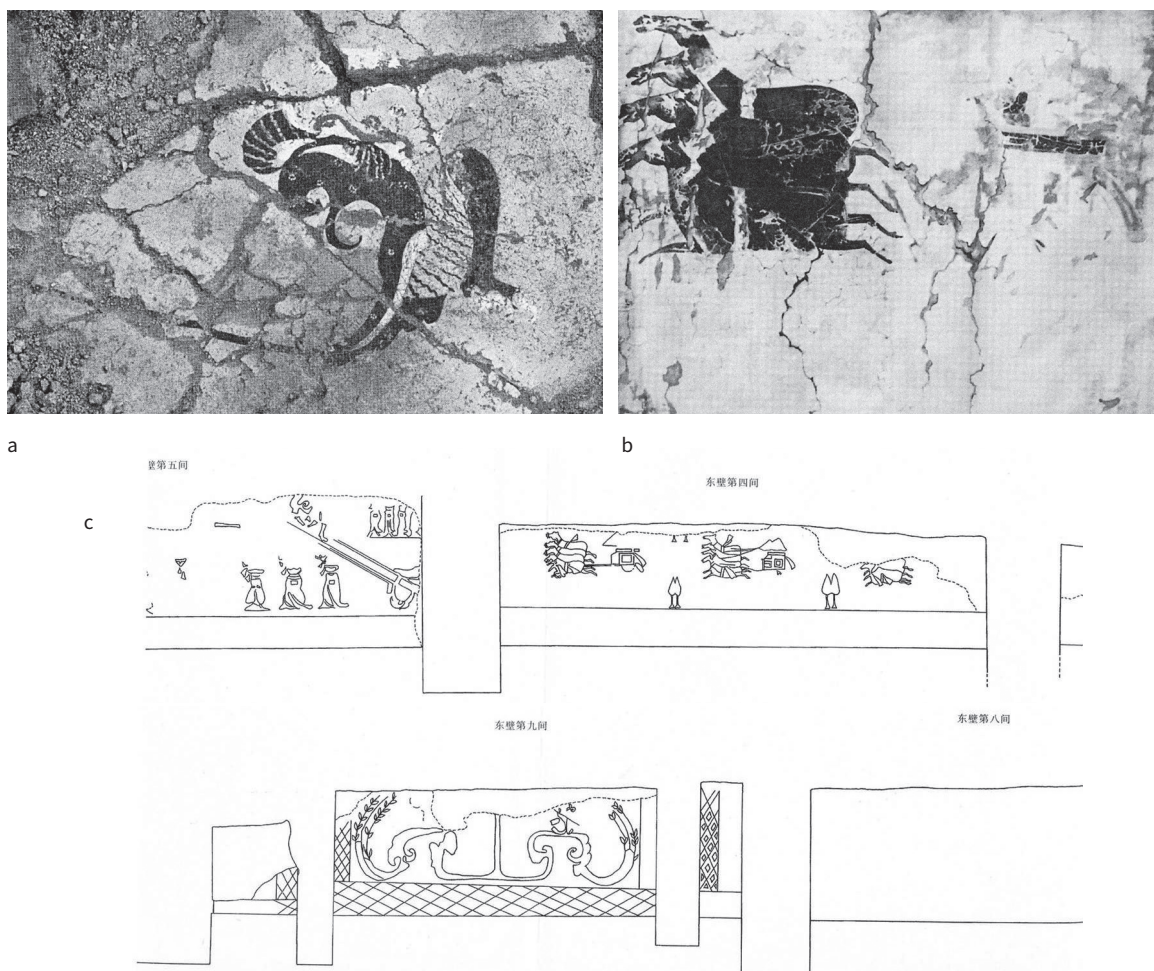
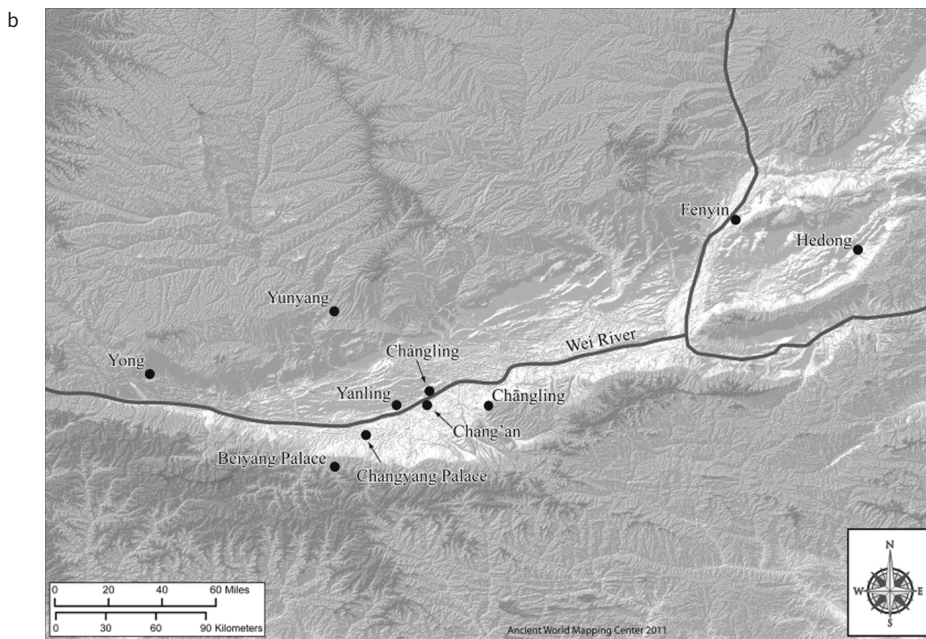
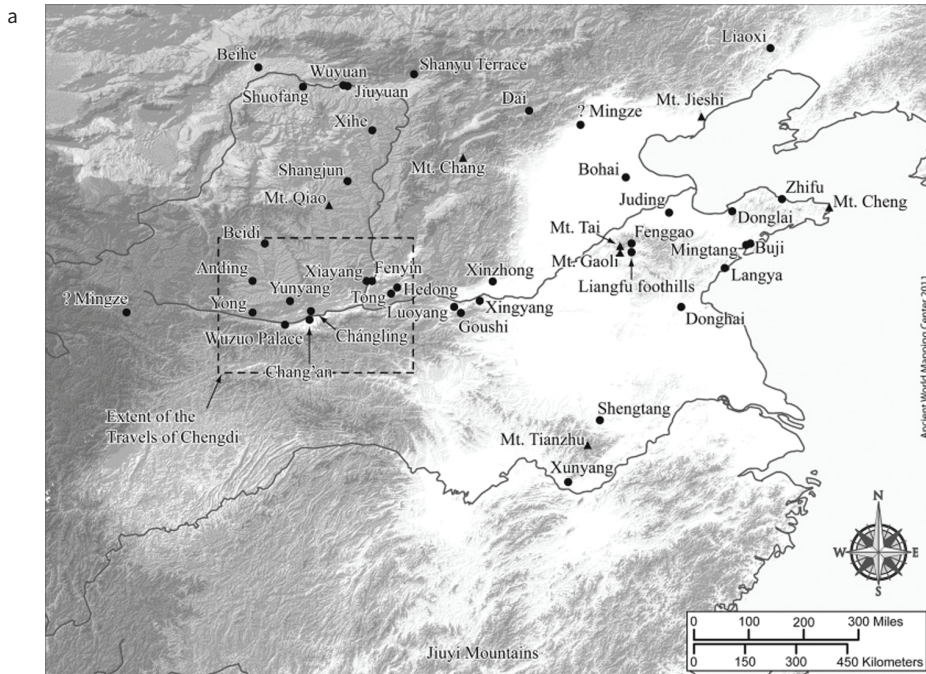


FIG. 1.14 (a) and (b) Two fragments of murals from the Qin Palace no. 3 at Xianyang, northwest of the Western Han capital of Chang'an. The mineral paints are on dry plaster. Archaeologists estimate the fragments to be circa 250 BCE. (c) Line drawing of a proposed reconstruction of the palace wall mural in which the fragments were located. Reproduced with permission from Shaanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, the images correspond to *Qin du Xianyang kao gu baogao*, 42 (images of fragments), fig. 441 (line drawing).

emperors put the city. Chengdi rarely ventured outside the capital, except for mandated visits to the cult sites established in honor of his own ruling house (Map 1.05a–b).¹¹⁸ Some of these were in or near the various mausoleum towns encircling Chang'an, which represented extraordinary concentrations of wealth and political power. For example, Changling and Maoling, and probably Duling as well, boasted nearly as many inhabitants as Chang'an county, according to the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography," and possibly quite a bit more, since unregistered people, including indentured servants, probably did not figure in the total counts of registered populations at the time.



MAP 1.05 (a) The extent of the imperial tours of inspection by Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE). (b) The limited imperial progresses undertaken by Han Chengdi (r. 33–7 BCE). Whereas Han Wudi journeyed all over his empire, Chengdi barely left his capital and suburbs, aside from traveling to offer the customary imperial sacrifices at Yong, well within the Guanzhong basin. The dotted box on Wudi's map (a) indicates the general area traveled by Han Chengdi in Guanzhong. Maps generated by the Jowkowski Institute of Archaeology at Brown University, based on Michael Nylan's research and two preliminary sketch maps generated by Scott McGinnis.

Chengdi is famous—infamous, really—for being the only Western Han emperor who is known to have commissioned two major mausoleum towns, as recounted in Loewe’s chapter on the two tombs. Each walled site, with its associated ritual complex (Fig. 1.15, Maps 1.06 and 1.07), would have housed—in addition to the graves of the emperor, empress, consorts, and empress dowagers—the graves and nearby burial pits of prominent ministers, successful generals, and others who had secured imperial favor. (More than two hundred “accompanying burials,” or *peizangmu*, have been located at each of the mausoleum towns at Maoling and at Duling.)¹¹⁹

Originally, the Western Han court forced many high-status and wealthy families to move to the mausoleum towns in the capital environs so that it could supervise them more easily.¹²⁰ Gradually, however, the chief residents of those mausoleum towns became both the makers and enforcers of Han policy, as powerful as or even more powerful than the emperor himself. (As it happens, Chengdi was the last Western Han emperor to insist that important families be relocated to the site of one of his two mausoleum towns, that at Changling.)¹²¹ By contrast, conscript and convict laborers working on the mausoleum towns and in their related industries lived and died there in comparative poverty, as is clear from one excavated cemetery near Yangling, Jingdi’s (r. 157–141 BCE) mausoleum site. Extensive excavations at Yangling have given us a much clearer idea of how people lived in and around the mausoleum complexes dedicated to the care of the deceased Western Han emperors.¹²²

Armed with this information about Chang’an city and Chang’an county, we now turn to consider how comparative history may further our understanding.

Preliminary Rome-China comparisons

The very title of this book encourages us to find illuminating comparisons and contrasts between the Roman empire and Western Han Chang’an. Classicists all recognize the significance of the date 27 BCE, for that is when Gaius Octavius became Caesar

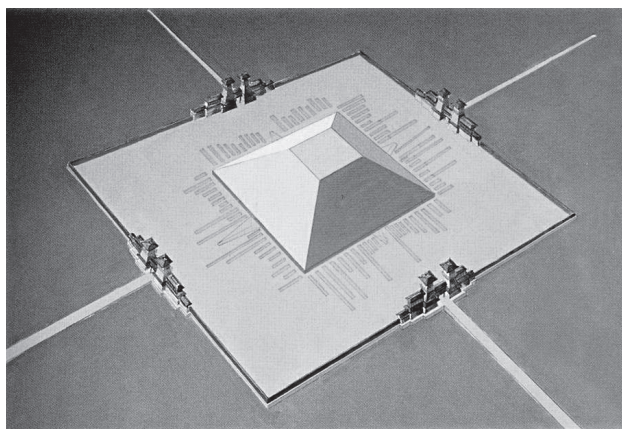
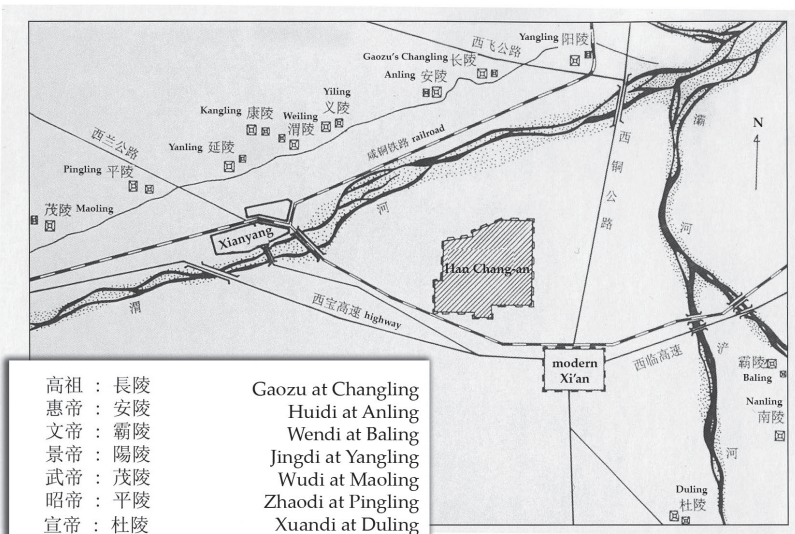


FIG. 1.15 Schematic illustration of an imperial mausoleum. Such images were first generated in connection with excavations at Jingdi’s Yangling, but scholars now believe that all imperial mausoleums would have looked much the same. Image after Nylan and Loewe 2010, 214, fig. 71.



MAP 1.06 Location of the imperial mausoleums ranged along the Wei River (on the north bank) and also in the southeast (where Baling, Duling, and Chengdi's Changling were). This map is reproduced in nearly every book on Chang'an, and it has been modified by Michael Nylan and Erin Leigh Inama.

高祖 : 長陵	Gaozu at Changling
惠帝 : 安陵	Huidi at Anling
文帝 : 霸陵	Wendi at Baling
景帝 : 陽陵	Jingdi at Yangling
武帝 : 茂陵	Wudi at Maoling
昭帝 : 平陵	Zhaodi at Pingling
宣帝 : 杜陵	Xuandi at Duling
元帝 : 渭陵	Yuandi at Weiling
成帝 : 延陵	Chengdi, Yanling, Changling
平帝 : 康陵	Pingdi at Kangling
哀帝 : 義陵	Aidi at Yiling

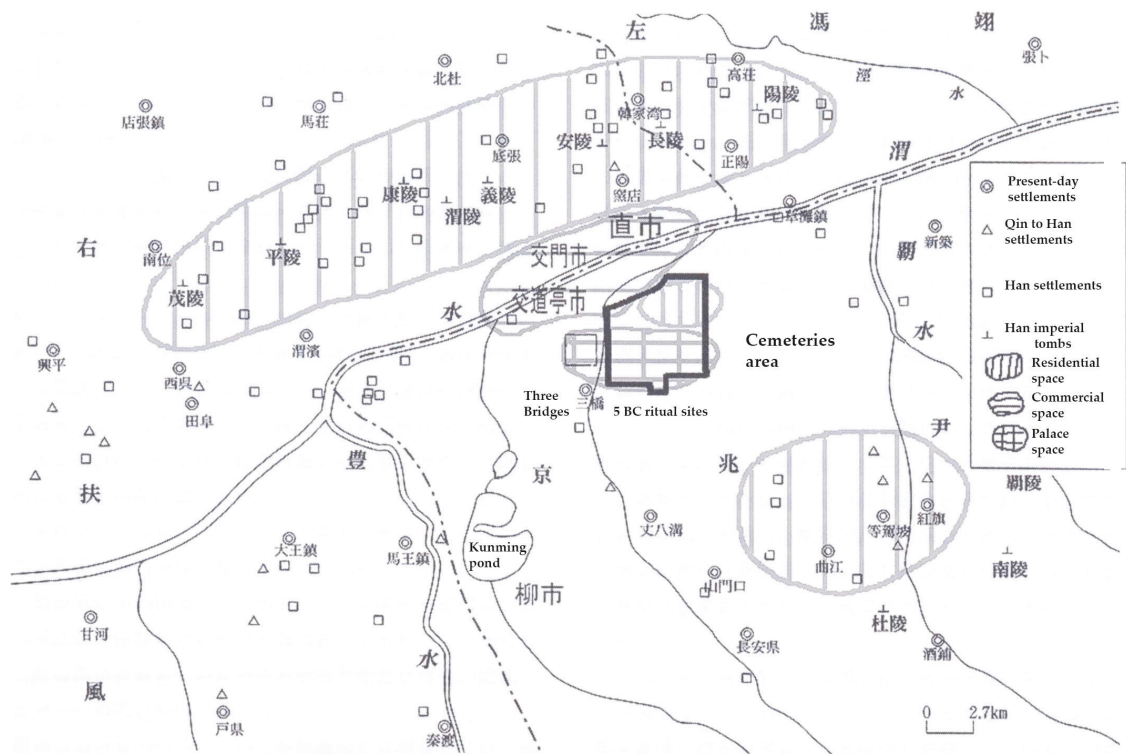


图 5 漢長安的空間構造

MAP 1.07 Conceptual layout of the whole Chang'an area, with a focus on the functional division of space in the capital and environs. After Chen Li 1996, modified by Michael Nylan after Cheng, Han, and Zhang, *Chang'an Han mu*.

Augustus, over a Roman empire that replaced the old republic; in 26 BCE there began the reordering of the Capitoline area, to reinforce that hill's associations with the founding of Rome. Aspects of Chengdi's reign recall achievements made during both the age of Augustus and of Hadrian. As many contributing chapters in this volume attest, it was Chengdi's era that saw the creation and implementation of so many of the institutions that eventually served as bases for succeeding dynasties in China. That capital's promotion of varying forms of classicism and the distinctive practices and institutions it generated to adroitly underscore the immediacy and relevance of the distant past represents one obvious point of cross-cultural comparison likely to bear more fruit in the near future. Already we may surmise that it is hardly likely that Chengdi's era would have seen the birth of a new form of rhetoric laden with classical allusions and employed in *fu*, in memorials, and in commentaries¹²³ had it not been for the new library project begun in 26 BCE (hence this volume's title), just as it is hardly likely that Greek and Roman rhetoric would have taken their distinctive forms had it not been for the library at Alexandria. Thanks to the work done in Chang'an by activist editors under the direction of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, the literary heritage of the long pre-imperial age to which Han was heir was distilled and often reconceived. As this impressive literary heritage was transcribed in the same language, if not the same script, as that in use in Western Han, activist editing may have played a larger role in Chang'an than in Rome, but the propensity for *all* manuscript cultures is to introduce major changes into texts, during the long centuries before the notion of "authoritative editions" was conceived. (See below in this introduction for more on manuscript cultures.)

Contrasts between governance in Rome and in Western Han Chang'an prove highly illuminating as well. Chengdi never exercised a *de facto* monopoly on ultimate decision making. Unlike the situation under Augustus and his successors, Chengdi's word did not automatically constitute law: imperial edicts ratified decisions made at the consultative court, where precedents often dictated that ministers initiate policy discussions, and formal court conferences could decide policy questions by majority rule among the participants. Several other striking contrasts have been noted in passing above, including the lack of a professional army in Western Han, the different typical career routes for members of the governing elite in the two empires, and the singularly heavy reliance of the Western Han administration upon agrarian taxes, rather than war booty, when funding its ventures. Whereas Roman ideals among members of the governing elite still reliably invoked the gentleman-farmer who only engaged in entrepreneurial ventures on the side, given his preoccupation with public service, more typically Western Han ideals substituted for this aristocratic agrarian ideology a view of life that unabashedly reveled in the luxuries and sophistication afforded by the urban experience (the more cosmopolitan the better), even if the high life might have to be funded by large estates outside the city.

Deserving far greater attention and analysis, in consequence, are the nominal rates cited for urbanization in late Western Han Chang'an sources versus those from the

Roman empire: the surviving tax registration figures estimate that some 27 percent of the registered population was living in or near towns of 10,000 people or more, whereas Roman historians believe the figure for urbanization in the Roman empire could not have gone beyond 15 percent (Map. 1.03).¹²⁴ Such figures may seem less astonishing to those who do not recall the conditions pertaining to the Roman empire. No city in the empire—not Carthage or Alexandria in early times, nor Constantinople later—ever came close to rivaling Rome in size, even if our estimates for Rome’s population in the early empire run the gamut, from a low of 200,000 to a high of well over 1 million people. Moreover, if scholars compare the imperial population register for 2 CE with a variety of excavated documents dating from the Qin–Han transition or Western Han, they will soon notice the phenomenal growth of midlevel cities over the course of Western Han. In the era of Gaozu, the Western Han founder, there were only 800 county-level cities, judging by the surviving records; by late Western Han, that number had grown to over 1,500 (or nearly double). At the same time, the excavated Zhangjiashan and Yinwan documents, which mention a total of 265 towns, corroborate Sima Qian’s picture in the *Hanshu* of an extremely high rate of concentration of resources and high-ranking officials in the greater metropolitan region of Han Chang’an.¹²⁵

If these figures are even roughly accurate, there are enormous implications of such high rates of urbanization, especially in the capital, especially if we factor in the higher proportion of officials (presumably literate for the most part) in Western Han versus the Roman empire.¹²⁶ Certainly, they might lead us to postulate somewhat higher rates of literacy for Chang’an and its realm, on the understanding that more urban dwellers would have found it convenient to attain basic literacy and numeracy. And *if* we can postulate higher literacy rates, these in turn may have hastened the invention of papyrus and paper during the two Han dynasties, for the material carriers of writing before paper (principally bamboo bundles and silk) were more cumbersome or expensive to produce than paper.

That said, specialized work on the city of Rome has gone on for roughly eighty years longer than such work in the Xi’an area. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, historians of China lack the sort of detailed information that Roman historians routinely cite (Chart 1.02a–b).¹²⁷ Historians of Western Han Chang’an do have a rough estimate of the size of the imperial bureaucracy in late Western Han (130,000 men in service); also a rough estimate of the officials who served in Chang’an (30,000 men in service). They have rough estimates for the registered population of Chang’an county and the greater metropolitan Chang’an region, even if these registries may or may not have included transient populations, bondservants, slaves, clients, diplomats, nobles, and guards on duty.¹²⁸ Han historians also are lucky enough to have certain statistics for omen spikes and natural disasters, as separate chapters in this volume attest.

Perhaps the worst approach we can bring to comparative work on the Roman and Western Han empires or on Augustus versus Chengdi is to rely too heavily on such few statistics as survive. As all scholars know, numerals are the characters most liable to

a

Name	Date	Length (m)	Source	Altitude of Source (m)	Level on entry into Rome	Average slope (m per km)	Length on arches (km)	Distribution within city
Appia	312 BC	16444.60	springs	30	20	0.6	0.1	II, VIII, IX, XI, XII, XIII, XIV
Anio Vetus	272–269 BC	63704.50	R Anio	280	48	3.6	–	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, XII, XIV
Marcia	144–140 BC	91424.10	springs	318	58.63	2.7	10	I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XIV
Tepula	125 BC	17745.40	springs	151	60.63	5.0	9	IV, V, VI, VII
Iulia	33 BC	22853.60	springs	350	63.73	12.4	10	II, III, V, VI, VIII, X, XII
Virgo	19 BC	20696.60	springs	24	20	0.2	1.2	VII, IX, XIV
Alsietina	2 BC	32847.80	Lake Alsietinus	209	71	6.0	0.5	XIV
Claudia	AD 38–52	68750.50	springs	320	67.40	3.8	14	ALL
Anio Novus	AD 38–52	86964.00	R Anio	400	70.40	3.8	11	ALL
Traiana	AD 109	57700.00	springs	300	71.16	3.8	–	ALL
Alexandrina	AD 226	22,000.00	springs	65	43	1.0	2.4	IX

b

TABLE 1
MATRIX OF DETERMINANTS OF ROMAN STATE REVENUE
AND THE SHARE OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE

year	(1) population	(2) tax rate	(3) inflation	(4) real growth	(5) military budget	(6) State revenue	(7) military share
1	100	100	-	-	100	133	75
150	133	100	0	0	133	177	75
	133	100	0	0	156	177	88
	133	120	0	0	133	212	63
	133	120	0	0	156	212	74
	133	100	0.1	0	133	206	65
	133	100	0.1	0	156	206	76
	133	120	0.1	0	133	246	54
	133	120	0.1	0	156	246	63
	133	100	0	0.1	133	206	65
	133	100	0	0.1	156	206	76
	133	120	0	0.1	133	247	54
	133	120	0	0.1	156	247	63
	133	100	0.1	0.1	133	239	56
	133	100	0.1	0.1	156	239	65
	133	120	0.1	0.1	133	287	46
	133	120	0.1	0.1	156	287	54
	133	100	0	0.2	133	239	56
	133	100	0	0.2	156	239	65
	133	120	0	0.2	133	287	46
	133	120	0	0.2	156	287	54
	133	120	0.1	0.2	133	333	40
	133	120	0.1	0.2	156	333	47

CHART I.02 Examples of the types of charts familiar to classicists studying the Mediterranean world but lacking for Han historians. (a) From Coulston and Dodge's classic *Ancient Rome*, showing aqueduct usage in Rome over several emperors. Reprinted courtesy of the School of Archaeology, University of Oxford. (b) From Walter Scheidel's comparative efforts, describing Roman military spending as a proportion of state revenue. Reprinted with permission from W. Scheidel, "In Search of Roman Economic Growth," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 22 (2009), 61.

mistranscription during the complex processes of manuscript copying and transmission. Moreover, we often do not have a very good idea of what exactly the numerals represent. As noted above, the 2 CE population register (misconceived by many as a “census”) only purports to tell us who paid certain taxes to the Han imperial administration; moreover, the round figures cited for certain locations (for our study, most relevantly, for Chang’an’s population) are an entirely different sort of figure than the exact figures given for other sites (figures probably based on the local accountings annually submitted to the throne).¹²⁹ Accordingly, to treat these statistics as reliable is very risky indeed, however tempting it is for chroniclers of Chengdi’s reign to rely on figures that seem actually to derive from Chengdi’s reign.¹³⁰ It is not that statistics are useless; it is that they are seldom handled with due care. Careful thought suggests that it may matter less what the population register does *not* specify (how the proportion of taxpayers relates to the empire’s total population) than what it *does* manage to say: that the registered population of Western Han Chang’an county in 2 CE did not far exceed the population for ten-odd administrative seats located elsewhere in the empire. In particular, the Five Capitals and two or three of the Western Han mausoleum towns (Maoling, Changling, and probably Duling) rivaled Chang’an county in size.¹³¹

Nativist narratives are apt to mishandle the sources when undertaking comparisons between imperial Rome and Western Han, given their inherent biases. To take but one example, modern economic historians in China tend to presume that the “free market” must have developed first outside China, since they associate anything “free” with the West for political reasons. By contrast, historians of Rome emphasize the “proactive role of government” in the social economy, reasoning that the Roman administration (not large by Chinese standards) in the first and second centuries CE tried to stimulate (or at least not hamper) private initiatives. But outside the two capitals of Rome and (later) Constantinople, local administration under Rome must have been self-perpetuating and more dependent upon local participation,¹³² more or less as it was during Western Han Chang’an. Moreover, the imperial courts in both Rome and Western Han Chang’an, from Han Wudi’s institution of the monopolies on,¹³³ had economic policies that looked very much alike. The following statement said of imperial Rome could well apply to mid- to late Western Han: “The transition from private to state enterprise, from arbitrary disposition of warehouses to well-organized areal concentration, may have taken years to accomplish. With the increasing demand for grain in the first century, imperial confiscation of private property and ambitious building schemes inevitably went hand-in-hand.”¹³⁴ So whence the evidence for this perceived gap between free and unfree markets that Chinese economic historians so insist upon? For their part, Western historians are all too apt to speak anachronistically of “Eternal Rome,” although this sort of talk was popularized in the fourth century CE, with Pope Leo, just as the real fabric of the city of Rome was collapsing.¹³⁵

. . .

Needless to say, the contributors to this volume hope that innovative forays into this fascinating period of early history, recently evinced in the preliminary attempts to roll out Rome-China comparisons, will spur the publication of many more specialized essays and monographs dedicated to the range of subjects broached here.¹³⁶ But as large-scale excavations are next-to-impossible to carry out in living cities like Xi'an and Xianyang, scholars may have to remain content for the foreseeable future with analyzing the undeniable riches already produced by excavations near old Chang'an. As noted above, that project alone would keep the entire early China field busy for decades to come.

For far too long one of Max Weber's silliest assertions has colored premodern urban studies in the China field, preempting the study of sustained, dynamic historical comparisons: his insistence that "an 'urban community,' in the full meaning of the word, appears as a general phenomenon only in the Occident."¹³⁷ As chapters in this volume show, late Western Han saw the gradual emergence of a highly sophisticated imperial court ruling a fully developed set of urban communities; capital and court were not just mere "settings" for interactions marked by complex norms, spatial characteristics, status hierarchies, shifting political alliances, and the family pedigrees of its leading participants. In focusing on the complex processes by which policy was made and lives negotiated by members of the governing elite at the capital and court during Chengdi's reign, the contributors hope that this volume will usher in a new day for early China in academic discourse. At any event, it is now time to turn to the chapters in the volume, a fine selection of studies representing the most recent research on late Western Han. The host of new perspectives driving the research of the contributors, along with several other issues, will be discussed briefly in the afterword.

Appendix: On the Finances of Chengdi's Innovations

When I first began this project on Chang'an some years ago, I assumed that nearly everything about Chengdi's reign could be explained by the single fact that the Han throne had been left badly cash strapped by Wudi's expansionist policies and mismanagement. Certainly, Chengdi's first official act after ascending the throne was to dramatically reduce the scale and range of the burial goods used for his father, Yuandi. Chengdi denied his father the pomp and circumstance associated with the mass consecration of carriages, horses, and other rare animals to an imperial funeral and interment, on the grounds that such lavish displays were at odds with the ancient rituals.¹³⁸ The same ostensible reason—a shortage in funds—is usually thought to underlie a volley of unprecedented changes in the manner, object, schedule, and location of imperial sacrifices outlined in the edicts and memorials. Then, too, historians know that Chengdi made peace with the Huhanye leader of one Xiongnu seminomadic group (called *chanyu*; traditionally, *shanyu*) and to have refused to invest more in southern campaigns to secure the Lingnan area far to the south—two initiatives that can also be read as cost-cutting measures.¹³⁹

A more careful review of all the evidence at hand cannot sustain the neat hypothesis that Chengdi's chief concern was to introduce fiscal restraint. Admittedly, just when Chengdi's court was embarking on the ruinously expensive construction work of a second imperial mausoleum at Changling (the subject of chapter 7, by Loewe), Chengdi's court also decided to tear down no fewer than twenty-five palaces and lodges in Shanglin Park that were infrequently used, including a special nature preserve built inside the park.¹⁴⁰ Soon after his accession, in 31 BCE, Chengdi moreover demanded a reduction in the total number of imperial chariots and horses. However, the backstory to this drama makes a hash of the fiscal narrative. The *Han jiuyi* (*Han Precedents*) says that Han Wudi ordered the servants and slaves of Shanglin Park, along with the capital's poor (defined as those whose assets were less than 5,000 cash), to raise deer in that pleasure park.¹⁴¹ Under Chengdi's father, Shanglin Park had produced 70 million cash in profits (again keeping deer is mentioned)—a sum said to be sufficient to maintain all the troops operating in the Western Regions. Late omen reports blame Chengdi for treating Shanglin Park as his “private” preserve or resource,¹⁴² but these are outweighed by the contrary image of Chengdi ceding to the Chang'an urban poor large tracts of parkland in three directions, the east, south, and west (the so-called *san chui*),¹⁴³ presumably “to extend favor to the people” in the same manner as the antique sages.¹⁴⁴ In any case, if Chengdi abolished a major source of income to the throne, as these sources insist, that is an extremely interesting phenomenon without known precedent. (It might tally with Chengdi's general antimilitaristic thrust, which earned him posthumous opprobrium by historians of the Ban family.)

Furthermore, we know that Chengdi's court, only shortly before the edict ordering laborers to return to work at the original mausoleum townsite of Yanling, had granted extensive tracts for tombs and residences at Changling to Xue Xuan, then Chancellor, as well as to Imperial Counsellor Wang Jun, to assorted generals and nobles (*liehou*), and to all the officials ranked at 2,000 bushels, grants that must have cost the throne a pretty penny. No less significantly, Chengdi or his court deemed it advisable to give out *nearly every year* lavish grants of wine, oxen, silk, and grain to groups in the empire (often to every adult male or every representative of a disadvantaged group, including widows, the aged, and the incapacitated), in addition to issuing nine general amnesties during his twenty-six year reign.¹⁴⁵ He sometimes reduced general taxes and poll taxes by as much as 40 cash, and he forgave loans to poor peasants for renting or buying land.¹⁴⁶ Meanwhile, he “restored” a number of marquisates that had been discontinued, though such high honors required fixed bestowals of land, houses, and servants or slaves, and sometimes other obligations.¹⁴⁷

Homer H. Dubs makes much, in his treatment of Chengdi's reign, of what it cost to buy nominal rank at Chengdi's court.¹⁴⁸ Perhaps Chengdi's court needed such funds gained from selling noble titles (as opposed to real nobilities) to offset considerable outlays, but we can no longer see every instance of budget tightening as a top priority at Chengdi's court.

Notes

- 1 Mumford 1968, 447–48.
- 2 As Assmann 2011, 130, notes with respect to early civilizations, there was no Great Tradition and Small Tradition: “not [being] a matter of elite culture as opposed to lower class culture, but of culture itself, . . . so one section of society (the elite) claims to be representative of the whole, . . . the bearer of culture itself” having valuable observations on the foreign and the political. See p. 109, on the “exotic” (cited here), and *ibid.*, 117–35, on the different modes in which elites “cast off savagery and put on humanity.” Of course, it is entirely possible that the “trickle-down” or “diffusion” presumption simply reflects that our sources were produced more often than not by members of the educated elite who deemed themselves worthy of emulation.
- 3 Knechtges 2002b. Western Han and Eastern Han (frequently conflated as “Han”) are two separate dynasties, run on rather different institutional bases, as will become clear in this volume.
- 4 That count includes Empress Lü but not Shaodi or the Prince of Changyi, who sat on the throne briefly.
- 5 This is the first book to focus on this age and place. For an all too typical view of Chengdi’s reign, see Wang Zijin and Fang Guanghua 2002; Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 218. Even the great Lü Simian shared this opinion; see his *Qin Han shi* (1947/1962), 181. For helpful studies of excavated materials, see Yang Zhenhong 2009; Yu Zhenbo 2012; Chen Wei 2012.
- 6 Homer H. Dubs portrayed Chengdi’s reign as a peaceful period, when “traditional practices were largely continued without change.” See Dubs 1938–55, 2:256. Zhu Shiguang 2000, 42, also emphasizes (in stronger language) how few disturbances there were in the capital region during Western Han.
- 7 See the final appraisal to *Hanshu* 10, the “Basic Annals of Chengdi,” for this observation. This chapter is presumed to be the work of Ban Biao, since the appraisal mentions Ban Jieyu, Biao’s aunt. See *Hanshu* 8.298–99n1, citing Ying Shao.
- 8 See protest, recorded in *Hanshu* 72.3087–89, against the nine ennobled *waiqi* (imperial distaff relatives).
- 9 Zhang Yu was appointed Chancellor in an attempt to diminish the influence of the Wangs, though he proved too timid to act, as *Qian Hanji* 26.474 attests. Feng Yewang was also considered for a high post, in hopes that he would oppose the Wangs. And Wang Zhang (2), became a close confidant of Chengdi, although he was “slandering” some of the powerful Wangs, especially Wang Feng. Evidently, Chengdi’s attempt to reorganize the highest posts in the central government was also meant to prevent concentration of power in the hands of the Wangs, who had monopolized the posts of Taiwei and Prefect of the Secretariat for too long. (Wang Feng held the latter post from 29 to 22 BCE; Wang Yin, from 22 to 15 BCE; Wang Shang, from 15 to 12 BCE; and Wang Gen, from 11 to 7 BCE.) Even the selection of the Zhao sisters of commoner origin may have been meant to offset the power of the Wangs, judging from Dowager Empress Wang’s angry reaction.
- 10 On this point, see Loewe’s chapters in this volume. Chengdi evidently “agreed” (*nuo*) to certain appointments and policies reluctantly, but not “without deliberation” (*wu jue*), to borrow the language of the *Yi Zhou shu* and *Da Dai Liji*. Richter 2013: 145–46, 150, suggests this phrase sometimes critiques the ruler, as in the Mawangdui *Jing fa* chapter, but this is not always the case (cf. *ibid.* 149, 152).
- 11 According to Chen Zhi’s 1980 *Sanfu huangtu jiaozheng*, 21, the capital was famous for the lavish way in which the locals “sent off their dead.” Chengdi also appointed Shao Xinchun, who had won great renown as a budget cutter, when privy treasurer for the Changxin Palace, the home of Dowager Empress Wang—perhaps to keep her on a tight leash! Moreover, Chengdi numerous times tried to play one member of the Wang family off against the others. See the appendix to the introduction.

- 12 For the balance at court, see Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 175, focusing on Wang Feng and his opponents.
- 13 Cf. Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 19, which says (in Chinese), “As for Chengdi, though his reign lasted twenty-six years (second only to that of Wudi), there were nonetheless no major changes in setting up or abolishing kingdoms.” The main activities by Chengdi’s court consisted of redrawing the boundaries of kingdoms and setting up new kings where there were no heirs.
- 14 Lu Yun 1991, 10. From the time of Han Wudi on, the area south of the Hebei Plain, along the lower reaches of the Yellow River, had frequently experienced floods. Things grew worse during the early years of Chengdi’s reign. In 29 BCE, for example, the Yellow River burst its banks at Jin Dike. There is the general sense among climatologists and geographers (e.g., Tan Qixiang) that the climate was gradually worsening by Chengdi’s reign, with flooding more severe. For a review of those arguments, see Chou Lihui 2011. See Loewe 1974, 188–90, for proposals to evacuate Chang’an in 30 BCE.
- 15 Tang Guxian and Xie Yanming 2012 shows that public security problems were at least as troubling under Han Wendi and Han Wudi as under Han Chengdi. Under Chengdi, Wang quickly suppressed bandits working at Nanshan, south of Chang’an. As Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 149, notes, Yuandi and Chengdi did not show any particular inclination to demote and punish high officials after omens; however, they seemed inclined to issue pardons in the wake of omens, especially those in the skies.
- 16 I suspect that at least part of Chengdi’s unrelievedly awful press may be due to the bad blood between the Ban and Zhao consort families (and hence bias on the part of Ban Gu, the historian). Lady Ban was second in line after Empress Xu, and she might have expected further elevation, once Empress Xu was deposed for barrenness in 18 BCE. Instead, Zhao Feiyan and her sister captured the emperor’s eye, and Feiyan was soon made empress. As soon as Zhao Feiyan was sure of her hold over Chengdi, she promptly tried to have Lady Ban charged with witchcraft (such activities being capital offenses), but Lady Ban cleverly defended herself against the charges, and upon her release she effectively removed herself from the imperial presence, so as not to incur future jealousy. Adding insult to injury, Zhao Feiyan and her sister were of commoner origin (they had been dancing girls) and many memorials sneer at their lowly origins. By contrast, Lady Ban came from a rich family allied with older distinguished lines like that of the Dus of Duling.
- 17 See Nylan 2011b. It is easy to overlook the sheer magnitude of the editorial changes wrought by the activist editors working under Liu Xiang’s direction, changes that ended in the compilation of “new texts” (*xin shu*) (Liu Xiang’s term). To take just one example, the new edition of the *Liezi* in eight scrolls, or chapters (*juan*), was produced after comparing and collating short works, only one of them a shorter *Liezi*, that once circulated under five separate titles in twenty *juan*. By Liu Xiang’s own account, he found many incorrect characters and some duplication among the various recensions. As similar accounts are given for many other “new texts” produced under Liu Xiang’s direction, Nylan concludes that many of the texts we hold in our hands and tend to label as “late Zhanguo” or “early Western Han” in fact date to late Western Han.
- 18 *Hanshu* 28, the “Treatise on Geography,” represents a major innovation, which many scholars believe is based upon the maps and master list of locations (and quite possibly, given those envoys, ethnographic descriptions of many locales) compiled under Chengdi. See Zhou Zhenhe 1987, esp. 1; Zhou concludes (pp. 23–24) that the figures for the registered population from 2 CE were merged with Chengdi’s political units from the Yuanyan and Suihe reign periods, with the result that many later scholars using these figures came to mistaken conclusions. For example, Chengdi, in 19 BCE, set up Guangde kingdom, and got rid of it in just a few months, for reasons that are no longer clear. For comparison, see the fragmentary marble plan of Severan Rome, as

- well as other early maps. Soon after Chengdi's reign (sometime during 1–5 CE), a certain Wang Jing was dispatched, along with maps and several classical texts, when he went to construct dams and locks on the Yellow River from Xingyang to the sea. See *Hou Hanshu* 76.2465, to which Wang Zijin 2007 adds little.
- 19 Notably, too, Chengdi visited one of the first museums, the so-called Wunderkammer (Feichang Room) at an unknown date. Chengdi's Feichang Room was included in a structure built earlier under Han Wudi inside the Weiyang Palace complex. During the Suihe reign period, Chengdi learned that a certain Wang Bao, wearing a sword, got as far inside the palace complex as the Feichang Room, and, when apprehended, Wang claimed that the Lord of Heaven had ordered him to live there. Chengdi also commissioned an extensive portrait gallery. For further details, see He Qinggu 2005 1.83–84.
 - 20 On this, see Tsuruma Kazuyuki 1980–81, esp. chart 3 (p. 18), which shows Chengdi placing far more emphasis than the preceding Western Han emperors on donating burial plots to his highest officials so that they would be buried near him, and raising the property qualifications for all others who desired proximity to his mausoleum site.
 - 21 For royal progresses, see Geertz 1983, 121–46. Arguably, the greater physical focus on Chang'an, the capital, meant less impetus to urbanization in the commanderies and counties and fewer local donations. However, archaeologists believe that this was offset by the enhanced desires of local elites to participate in the “core” capital culture and also the immense size of the bureaucracy outside the capital. See Huang Yijun's chapter in this volume on this.
 - 22 For example, Hölscher 2004; Boatwright 1987.
 - 23 Steinhardt 1990 includes a brief section, as does Victor Xiong 2000. Most of the very few exceptions are discussed in Baker 2006.
 - 24 Victor Hugo, in his *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, called architecture the “great universal writing of humanity,” which was superseded by the “new writing of humanity” (i.e., the printed book), which Hugo thought would eventually “kill” architecture. See Hugo, cited in Wright 1966, 53.
 - 25 The appearance of multistory buildings was achieved in Qin and Han wooden buildings by building the palatial structure around an earthen core. Watchtowers surmounted load-bearing perimeter walls. Typical buildings of wood were one-story high, in contrast to Rome, where concrete insulae could have five or six stories.
 - 26 See n. 28 below for the opening of the Shanglin parklands under Chengdi; cf. Hulsewé 1987.
 - 27 Of course, the largest of these rivers, the Wei, led out to the Yellow River and hence to the “area east of the passes.”
 - 28 The sources speak of 36 major parks, 12 palaces, and 25 lookout towers. After Wudi built Jianzhang Palace, there were said to be some 60 palaces and lookout towers. See Wang Shejiao 1995 for the size of Shanglin Park. One rich man from Maoling, named Yuan Guanghan, had ten thousand ingots of gold in assets, also eight or nine hundred servants. At Mount Beimang he built a park that stretched 4 *li* east to west, 5 *li* north to south, and that had water flowing through it. Yuan Guanghan later allegedly committed a crime, and all his birds and beasts and plants were confiscated for use in the Shanglin Park. See He Qinggu 2005, 4.234–35; the same story appears in *Xijing zaji*. (Neither story specifies a precise time period, unfortunately.)
 - 29 The 2012 exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, UK), *The Search for Immortality: Tomb Treasures of Han China*, displayed items identified as “exfoliators” and the exhibition labels spoke of “public baths.” The exfoliators appear in the exhibition catalogue (Lin Yongqiang 2012, 220, plate 102), but the catalogue makes no mention of “public baths” (only a toilet found in a Xuzhou tomb).
 - 30 Cf. Barrow 1951, 131. Barrow talks of every Roman town having two main streets at right angles, but his statement could only apply to planned towns in the provinces (not to Rome or the older municipalities).

- 31 For jade ornaments found in Han noble tombs, consult Erickson's unpublished paper on heart-shaped jade pendants.
- 32 Three large cemeteries of what appear to convicts and corvée laborers have been reported to date: one built circa 221 BCE, found 1.5 kilometers from Lishan, Qin Shihuang's necropolis; one near Jingdi's necropolis of Yangling; and third graveyard discovered 2 kilometers southwest of Luoyang. See Barbieri-Low 2007, 212–56, esp. nn. 136–37 and fig. 6.4.
- 33 See Wang Zijin 1994 for details; cf. Nylan 2011a.
- 34 An extensive bureaucracy based in Chengdi's capital provided the emperor and his court regular reports on the workings and welfare of the city. The size of this capital bureaucracy dwarfs any estimates for imperial Rome: some 30,000 bureaucrats were assigned to Chang'an (county?), out of the total of 130,000 on Chang'an's payroll (the rest performing functions at the commandery and county level), aside from the nobles and kings required to pay regular visits to court. The subtext of many court debates becomes, then, How to pay for such an extensive and expensive bureaucracy (whose ratio to subjects dwarfed the number of imperial bureaucrats in late imperial China)? Upkeep of the palaces and gardens must have been ruinously expensive as well. See the appendix to the introduction for indications that, during Chengdi's reign, efforts were made to exert tighter financial control over the administration of the capital and the other localities.
- 35 See Crone 2003, *passim*; Elvin 1973, chaps. 1–3.
- 36 See Qin Zhonghang 1972 for a convict laborers' cemetery near Yangling; for comparison, see n. 32 above. No cemeteries for convict or corvée laborers have been found elsewhere in the vicinity of Western Han Chang'an to date, aside from additional cemeteries found in connection with Xianyang, the Qin imperial capital. Convict graves have also been found in Luoyang from Eastern Han times.
- 37 In preference to Scheidel, in Harris 2008, readers are urged to consult two translations from the Chinese: Swann 1950; Watson 1969, vol. 2.
- 38 Unlike American and Roman masters, Chinese masters could not by law kill these slaves as animals.
- 39 See Lewis 2000.
- 40 A number of other cults seem to have arisen in late Western Han (e.g., worship of Gaomei, or cults established for the First Silk-Weaver and First Forester), but they cannot be precisely dated. See Bodde 1975.
- 41 Hulsewé 1979. Cf. Lü Simian 1982, 2:598–600. Moreover, the fourteenth-generation descendant of Kongzi, one Kong Guang, at the time of Chengdi was esteemed for his leniency in law cases and for his loans to migrants and poor people (*Hanshu* 81.336–66). For comparison, see the materials on Zhang Yu, Chengdi's tutor, as reported in An Zuozhang and Liu Dezeng 2000, 18.
- 42 *Hanshu* 71.3045.
- 43 Sometimes as an extension of trends begun under Yuandi's reign. Note that Yang Xiong was another key promoter of Sima Qian's history, though he registered two critical remarks about Sima Qian in *Fayan* 5.16, 7.8.
- 44 Nylan 2008b; Fukui Shigemasa 2005.
- 45 Astute students of Han history are only beginning to try to parse the formats and locations for these policy discussions, having belatedly set aside the outdated models for the Oriental despot. As literary specialists know well, edicts from the time of Yuandi and Chengdi are particularly replete with citations drawn from the Five Classics. See Wang Qicai 2009, esp. 115ff.; cf. Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 150.
- 46 See Nylan 2011a. Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 141–42, provides a helpful chart outlining the training of Yuandi, Chengdi's father, in the Five Classics.
- 47 See, for example, Fukui Shigemasa 2005; Kern 2005; Nylan 2008a, 2011a.

- 48 Contrast the extensive excavations at Cloaca Maximus, culminating in the discovery of Rome's "lost aqueduct" (the Aqua Traiana), dated early second century CE, reviewed in Taylor 2012.
- 49 *Yonglu*, *juan* 8, 170, cites a third-century source, Jin Zhuo, who argued, "In the Western capital, there was no Taixue." Cheng Dachang, after sifting through the evidence, concurs. Jin should have known what he was talking about, as a Jin dynasty minister, whose highest posts were very high indeed: Shangshu Lang and Yushi Dafu. Jin was also a specialist in phonology and author of the *Hanshu yinyi*, in 17 *juan*, and *Hanshu jizhu*, in 13 *juan*.
- 50 Xu Weimin 2011, 221, states, "In late Western Han they did not pay so much attention to the monthly parade of robes and caps," but Xu supplies no evidence for this statement, which implies that the monthly parades were usually within the mausoleum precincts. As "proof," he states that Han Chengdi even gave a burial plot beside Zhaodi's mausoleum for his tutor Zhang Yu to be buried in. The connection seems obscure, at best. For Rome, the degree to which the Roman fora were truly open to the public in imperial days is hotly debated; see Hölkeskamp 2010 versus Millar 1998. The physical evidence seems to favor Hölkeskamp.
- 51 Zanker 1988; Nylan 2008b; Nylan and Loewe 2010, introduction. That many of the ornamental roof tiles and bricks were made by offices supervised by the Zongzheng, office of the imperial clansmen, is surely significant.
- 52 On literacy, two articles by Robin Yates and by Anthony Barbieri-Low that are often cited in Branner and Li 2011 are deeply flawed. While Yates's essay contains useful information, it overplays the likelihood to which "ordinary members of the population in Qin and Han times could have possessed basic literacy" (p. 367); it also fails to consider sufficiently the difficulties of extrapolating literacy rates for different groups, different regions, and different levels of literacy. Meanwhile Barbieri-Low thinks writing essential to empire, even though the Incas had no writing in their administration of their empire. See Nylan 2000; Kern 2001.
- 53 Whereas Roman historians routinely make use of more than 396,000 Latin inscriptions listed at the Clauss-Slaby site (www.manfredclaus.de), some 300 inscriptions of any length in Chinese date to the classical era, and less than a hundred to Western Han.
- 54 Admirable for Rome in memory is Edwards 1996.
- 55 Unfortunately scientific archaeology, which came late to the People's Republic of China, is to some degree still in thrall to the written sources (as others have noted before); hence, the relentless search for inscriptions on objects that may verify the early histories. Modern archaeology was born in China as the handservant of the nationalists; it explicitly sought to disprove the claims of the so-called antiquity doubters associated with Gu Jiegang and his circle. One might compare "pure Rome worship" as reported in Hermansen 1982, 139. Undoubtedly, the best of these post-facto accounts is Cheng Dachang's (1123–1195 CE) *Yonglu*, as the *Siku quanshu* editors acknowledge.
- 56 Hulsewé 1979.
- 57 See, for example, the *Bohutong* section on "Capitals" (Jingshi). Liu Qingzhu describes an evolution under Western Han whereby the first ancestral shrine erected to the founder was placed inside the capital city; succeeding ancestral shrines were then located outside the walls; and finally the ancestral shrines were placed beside each other within the grounds of an individual emperor's mausoleum. Liu sees this evolution as reflecting the declining status of the ancestral shrine during Western Han, but this evolution also prompts other interpretations. See Liu Qingzhu 2007, esp. 134.
- 58 The extent of his powers is indicated by the fact that his written assent was apparently required for troops to be raised in the area under his jurisdiction, even when an imperial rescript ordered the call-up (*Hanshu* 76.3233), judging from an incident during Chengdi's reign. That four out of the five late Western Han Governors of the Capital (Zhao Guanghan, Zhang Chang, Wang Zun, Wang Zhang, and Wang Jun)—all with good reputations—were charged with high

crimes while in office, upon which they suffered dismissal, demotion, or execution, suggests the difficulties attached to this post. On the one hand, officeholders were expected to rigorously enforce the laws; on the other, they were forbidden to put innocent people to death or engage in “oppressive activity.” Wang Jun was asked as Sili Xiaowei to frame the indictment that led to Kuang Heng’s dismissal as Chancellor in 30 BCE.

- 59 These Three Supports were established in 104 BCE, replacing the Neishi of the Left and Right. The office of Neishi was established during Qin and split into the two offices in 155 BCE, as the capital population grew. Up to fifty-seven counties were administered by these Three Supports in Western Han (twelve more counties than existed in the same area under Qin). For the Sanfu, see Kamada Shigeo 1949; Ōkushi 1992.
- 60 It was quickly restored under Chengdi’s successor but put under the command of the Da Sikong, one of the Three Lords of the Executive Council.
- 61 *Shiji* 104.2778; *Hanshu* 19A.736; *Hou Hanshu* 28.3261, 87.2887. Giele 2001, 55 (sec. 3.2.2), says, “Although he [the person in this post] shared the name *xiaowei*, usually translated as “colonel” with military officers stationed around the capital, his duties were actually more akin to those of a police officer or to those of the Regional Inspectors who scrutinized the work and behavior of the provincial [i.e., local] officials for signs of misconduct. . . . He . . . somehow enjoyed the institutionalized, if not personal, trust of the emperor.”
- 62 For this, see *Linzi Qi mu*.
- 63 Readers may consult Loewe’s *Biographical Dictionary* for lists of official titles. Hucker’s list (however excellent for Ming) is not used, because the duties attached to the same title changed substantially over time.
- 64 According to the registers of the taxpaying population dated ostensibly to 2 CE, the greater metropolitan Chang’an region had a registered population of more than 682,000. NB: (a) We have precise figures for no more than ten of the county units in this region, and probably home county figures include inhabitants of the surrounding countryside as well (b) As a round figure, this surely represents an estimate, as contrasted with exact figures given for the other counties in the same population register. (c) We will never know how many unregistered subjects the region had. Estimates for the population of Augustan Rome vary greatly, ranging from a low of 250,000 estimated by Ferdinand Lot, to a high of 1,487,560 (plus slaves) estimated by Giuseppe Lugli. Packer 1967 argues, on the basis of evidence from Ostia, that Rome’s population was probably far less than one-third the usual figure given of 1 million. Packer 1967, 85–87, therefore opts for well “under a million” (agreeing with Armin von Gerkan in this).
- 65 Strictly speaking, in Roman times, emperors were consecrated only after their deaths, but Roman rhetoric tended to exalt living emperors to godlike status. See Barrow 1951, 145. Also, some Roman emperors were described as *divus* on the coins that featured their images (unless those coins were issued posthumously). The cult of Rome and Roman generals began with Pompey (who predates Augustus). Barrow thinks the cult took on different form by the end of the second century CE, because the emperors by then were of foreign extraction. See Noreña 2011.
- 66 See Knapp 2011, 129.
- 67 See Vitelli 1980. The Roman empire did not face as many transportation problems as other early landlocked empires, as its location on the Mediterranean made long-distance commodity trading and the shipping of tax grain relatively cheap. See Horden and Purcell 2000.
- 68 See n. 67.
- 69 Elvin 1973, 27. Elvin assumed a “great measure” (*zhong*) of 6 *hu*, 4 *dou*. I am figuring the distance from the Ordos region, where the Xiongnu were based, during Qin, but this figure may be too large, as the Xiongnu came close at times to the Qin capital of Xianyang. As during

- overland transport, the oxen or horses pulling the vehicles ate some of the grain themselves; thus the longer the transportation took, the less grain remained. See *Hanshu* 94B.3824–25 (Yan You’s memorial to Wang Mang).
- 70 See Zhu Shiguang 2000, 38, for this estimate.
- 71 *Shiji* 129.3262 (by Sima Qian’s reckoning). Ban Gu thought the region around Chang’an was “so wealthy in its suburbs and fields / They call it ‘nearly Shu/Sichuan.’” See *Hou Hanshu*, 40A.1338. Of course, it is possible that Guanzhong represented 60 percent of the empire’s wealth that was “available to the state,” though by Wudi’s reign, when Sima Qian was writing, the empire was centralized to a very high degree. We should not forget that the plains to the east of Guanzhong were highly developed and populous as well. I thank Brian Lander for his word of caution on Sima Qian’s percentages.
- 72 Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 2010.
- 73 Generally speaking, locally hired manual laborers dig down to the bottom of the tomb, when alerted to the possibility that it exists. When the locals find something of interest, the educated professional archaeologists take over to supervise their work. As the locals often have been doing fieldwork for a long time, they are often quite knowledgeable, despite their lack of formal training. Chinese archaeologists are extremely good at excavating tombs, since they do this all the time. But given the speed with which tombs need to be excavated, if they are not to be entirely lost to the archaeological record, the decisions made about sites are often unduly hasty. Often the wisest decision is simply to “cover over a site” (*hui tian*), once its contents are known and photographed. One expert, Sophia-Karin Psarras, has written in a forthcoming book that “the tendency among Chinese archaeologists to associate archaeological date with textual history and particularly to equate luxury with nobility, rather than simply with wealth . . . becomes necessary in order to achieve a positive date for the tomb” (draft p. 19). This is a particular problem with the mausoleum towns, where the merely wealthy lived nearby nobles.
- 74 The importance of the wooded mountains around Chang’an cannot be overestimated, since architecture in Guanzhong was mainly constructed of timber and tamped earth. Huge forests of bamboo lay south of the city, according to *Shuijing zhu*, *juan* 18–19, in the Qinling Mountains, where precipitation was high.
- 75 The ironies of this relative disinterest in commoners’ dwellings in a socialist state are obvious. See Snodgrass’s essay in Nyman and Loewe 2010. For the attention drawn to certain luxury items, especially those with inscriptions, see Glover 2006.
- 76 Not coincidentally, the mausoleum town of Baling, to take another example, was built close to or on the Qin cult site of Zhiyang. Also, almost certainly the walls that surrounded the Capital Granary were originally the walls surrounding a Qin county seat. This repurposing of old sites went on continually, so as to save men, materiel, and time.
- 77 Li Lingfu 2009, 33. Cf. Xu Weimin 2011, 118.
- 78 By contrast, the map given in Liu Rui 2011 (Fig I.11 in the current volume) situates the Mingguang Palace where most maps put the northern half of the Changle Palace.
- 79 See Arlen Lian’s chapter for the best available map of Shanglin Park, even if it fails to reflect changes to the park over time.
- 80 He Qinggu 1995/2006, 2.111, notes the following: “Some would say that a Circular Moat (Biyong) existed already at the time of Wudi, but the usual story is that under Chengdi, in the Jianwei Commandery, they found a set of sixteen old musical chimestones, at which time Liu Xiang persuaded the emperor that he ought to institute a Circular Moat ritual center.” Cf. Guo Handong 1997, for newly discovered stone chime sets, with more than 1,200 characters on them specifying songs mentioned in the Han literature, such as “Wuxing” 五行.
- 81 Borell 2010.

- 82 Chen Zhi 1980, 2.122. *Wenxuan* 1.13 (*Xidu fu*), suggests that Chengdi's imperial apartments were the most luxurious of those belonging to the Western Han emperors. On the repurposing of old jades, see Rawson 1997; *Zhongguo yuqi quanji* 1993.
- 83 Contrast the north–south orientation derived from GIS maps by Timothy Baker in his 2009 PhD dissertation with the east–west orientation Liu Rui proposes in his 2011 book.
- 84 *Leibian Chang'an zhi*, *juan* 2, moreover, adds: “From the two Han dynasties [i.e., Western and Eastern] on [until Sui], between the palaces and watchtowers there were dispersed [ordinary] people's households. Sui Wendi [the founder of Sui] thought this was ‘not convenient’ with respect to matters, so [he decreed] that within the imperial city, there would only be offices. He refused to allow others to live there; the offices had their duties, and they tended to be more meticulous and refined. This was Sui Wendi's innovation, most probably.”
- 85 As other chapters in this volume discuss the configuration of its perimeter walls, I do not discuss this here in great detail. However, Koga 1980 emphasizes some discrepancies between the archaeological record and received accounts regarding the shape and size of Western Han Chang'an, as well as the capital's thoroughfares.
- 86 For this, see also Wang Zijin 1994; Nylan 2011a. The Yangzi River was growing in importance, but the sources do not discuss it much. Li Ying's *Yizhou ji* (now in fragments) says that “small walled cities have nine gates.” See *Taiping huanyu ji*, *juan* 72.
- 87 I follow the *Shuowen* definition for *mo* here, but Koga Noboru 1972, 546, takes this undefined term to mean “road running *either* north–south or east–west,” the particular orientation being region specific but north–south in the area around Chang'an.
- 88 See *Hanshu* 51.2328 for the phrase “planted them with green pines.”
- 89 All the palaces and their subsidiary buildings had extensive water intake and drainage systems, by which wastewater was collected outside the city walls and in the city moat, rather than spewing it into local waterways, as was done in Rome. For Xu Weimin's theory about drainage, see Xu Weimin 2011, 116; Xu's ideas were corroborated by Chai Yi (Xi'an Shi Kaogu yanjiusuo) during a personal interview, but they have not appeared elsewhere in print.
- 90 See, for example, the remarks by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BCE), in *Ant. Rom.* 3.67: “The extraordinary greatness of the Roman Empire manifests itself above all in three things: the aqueducts, the paved roads, and the construction of the drains.” By way of comparison, the sixth-century writer of *Zacharias's Chronicle* emphasizes the urban amenities represented by parks and water supplies.
- 91 The figure of 160 probably represents the highest number of wards in Chang'an city during Western Han; the number may have varied somewhat over time. See Ma Hsien-hsing 1976, 271–72.
- 92 For a list of granaries in the Chang'an area, see chapter 3.
- 93 Li Yufang 1996. See n. 43 in this introduction.
- 94 Many of these highly valuable objects were distributed only following an imperial order. See Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010.
- 95 *Jinshu* 60.1651.
- 96 *Hanshu* 24.1557.
- 97 See Zhang Jihai 2006, esp. 126–56, for an excellent summary of the extant date on markets.
- 98 See n. 101 in this introduction.
- 99 *Taiping yulan*, 827.13b (emphasis added).
- 100 People could sell from them during the day and sleep in them at night, saving money and protecting their goods.
- 101 Zhang Jihai 2006, fig. 13.
- 102 Judging from the Juyan documents, the five persons in a single household often meant a husband and wife, two children, and one grandparent. Were there fewer children and no

- grandparents in Western Chang'an? As shown in Utsunomiya 1955, 116, population figures are given for only ten of the cities or counties in the population register in the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography," in contrast to the commanderies or kingdoms. Utsunomiya adds "estimates" for areas where these are not supplied.
- 103 The site, once confidently labeled the Shaofu (Privy Treasury), is now believed to have been a dormitory for officers on palace guard duty.
- 104 Cf. Knapp 2011, 75, on what Knapp regards as the "normal pattern" in preindustrial societies: "In Egyptian documents, we find about 60 percent of households living as extended and multiple families, with 35 percent as conjugal (nuclear) families, and only 5 percent living as solitaires with no family." In Qin and Han, the laws actively discouraged extended family households, except in noble lines. On the morphology of the early empires, see Lai 1995.
- 105 The introduction in Xu Weimin 2010 draws our attention to this. Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 23–24, explains why the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Geography" almost certainly dates from Chengdi's reign.
- 106 Li Lingfu, personal communication, July 2012, drawing upon the Juyan materials, among others.
- 107 The work of Ma Hsien-hsing, once dismissed by leading Chang'an archaeologists, is increasingly the focus of the investigations into Chang'an city and its environs by younger scholars such as Liu Rui. For Ma's work on the capital, consult Ma Hsien-hsing 1976.
- 108 *Kaogu* 1985, no. 4.
- 109 Zhang Heng, "Western Capital" *fu*, trans. after Knechtges 1982–96, 1:192 (slightly modified).
- 110 Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009.
- 111 For a digital reconstruction of Tang Chang'an, see the website of Heng Chye Kiang, professor at Singapore National University.
- 112 The murals show a barbarian or general driving a chariot(?); a chariot racing scene; fragments of a curtain with swags (typically found in banquet scenes); and a small creature (probably mythological). A tentative reconstruction puts these fragments in a continuous frieze on the palace walls.
- 113 Unfortunately, Walter Scheidel, in Harris 2008, introduces a series of errors when surveying Han economic institutions. See Nylan, forthcoming a, on "money" (scheduled for publication late 2014).
- 114 For the banquet murals mentioned here, see Arlen Lian's chapter, Figs. 4.05a–d.
- 115 The overweening strength of the Chang'an economy may have suppressed economic development elsewhere, however, especially in Jiangnan, the area in the southeast farthest from the capital. See Zhu Yining 2011. For slaves, see n. 43 in this introduction.
- 116 As Arlen Lian's chapter notes, each of the major late Western Han mural tombs found in the last ten years has been looted, so only a relatively small selection of grave goods was found at each of the sites.
- 117 On this, see the chapter by Arlen Lian.
- 118 It is also crucial to notice the location where the emperors purportedly died, as emperors were meant to die in their main residence. Chengdi died in the luxuriously appointed Zhaoyang Palace, associated with the Zhao sisters; Wudi died in the Wuzuo Palace, outside the city walls, in the Sweet Springs Palace complex. Chengdi's death at the age of forty-seven was later blamed on the Zhao sisters, since supposedly Chengdi "had always been fit and strong, with no chronic illnesses" (*su qiang, wu jibing*). For the suspicions of murder, see the summary by Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 183n2.
- 119 This figure was repeated verbally by several archaeologists based in Xi'an during the summer of 2012.
- 120 See Tsuruma 1978, 1980–81.

- 121 Most scholars assert that Yuandi's famous decision "not to bother the common people" (*wang you dong yao zhi xin*) remained in force throughout the rest of Western Han, but that is incorrect. See *Qian Hanji* 25.445. We know of some people forcibly removed to Changling, including Ban Kuang, father of Ban Jieyu. See *Hanshu* 100A.4198; Clark 2008, 72.
- 122 See n. 31 above for details.
- 123 This new form of rhetoric is discussed in Wang Qicai 2009; Wang does not discuss reasons for its relatively abrupt emergence, however. A paper by Nylan prepared for a forthcoming volume in honor of Sir Geoffrey Lloyd shows that a similar rhetoric followed in the wake of the classicists' efforts at Alexandria's library.
- 124 I base this urbanization rate on the figures given in the "Treatise on Geography" in the *Hanshu*. See Xiao Ailing 2006 and 2010, for corroborative details. The rates for urbanization for Rome were given to me by Carlos Noreña (personal communication, spring 2012). Other estimates for the urbanization rates throughout the Roman empire hover around 10 percent.
- 125 Xiao Ailing 2006, 2010.
- 126 Nylan 2000 shows that Han officials were not all literate by any means. Knapp 2011, 3–4, says that Roman elites constituted roughly 40,000 adult males, or 0.5 percent of the population under Roman rule; however, if we figure 130,000 Western Han officials earning 600 bushels per year as the minimum definition of "Han governing elite," we already have a figure more than three times higher, and that does not account for other parts of the population, including wealthy female heads of households.
- 127 In place of these detailed charts, historians of early China continue to treat comparable issues in much vaguer terms. See Tang Guxiang and Xie Yanming 2012.
- 128 Some vague indication of how many nobles (as opposed to kings) were permanent residents in Western Han Chang'an can be derived from the figures given for 113 BCE: of 123 nobilities abolished by Han Wudi for an infraction, 40 nobles were listed as residents of Chang'an, while an additional 37 resided in nearby imperial mausoleum towns. On this basis, Wang Zijin 2007, 157, estimated that 73.39 percent of Wudi's nobles resided in the Chang'an area, regardless of where they hailed from; Wang presumes comparable figures for late Western Han.
- 129 Even more obviously different, the use of "three" to mean "many" and "ten thousand" to mean "legion."
- 130 See Zhou Zhenhe 1987. The literature noting some of the problems is reviewed in Wang Zijin 2007. See also nn. 13, 18 in this introduction.
- 131 See Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 132–34, for the administration of these mausoleum towns. Zhu Shiguang 2000, 39, mentions the theory held by some scholars that these imperial mausoleum towns virtually constituted a separate commandery under the Commissioner of Ceremonial (Taichang) until 43 BCE, during the reign of Yuandi, who took these areas from that minister's control.
- 132 Administration of the empire can be roughly divided into different sectors, including local administration. Cities (*coloniae*, *municipia*, *civitates*) each had their administrations and local laws as well as local regulation of private and public law. Each city had a council, or *curia*, whose administrative functions were filled by regular citizens and other people co-opted by the state. This local government was self-perpetuating and autonomous; only the provincial government could overrule it, except for the tax levy. In the capitals of Rome and Constantinople, there was a senate (a formal ruling body), but the real administration was carried out by urban prefects assisted by other staff. The two capitals were under direct imperial rule.
- 133 It is impossible to establish exact figures for the number of Roman citizens on the grain dole, but something like 15 percent of the urban population of Rome was entitled to receive free grain and olive oil. Nor is it possible to say to what extent the government relied on purchases from private entrepreneurs. See Vitelli 1980, 22.

- 134 Vitelli 1980, 64.
- 135 See Watkin 2009; cf. Edwards 1996, 28, citing a critique of descriptions where Rome is a “synchronous, permanent present.” Of course, “Eternal Rome” was first postulated by Propertius (reign of Augustus) in his lines “Romulus aeternae nondum formaverit urbis moenia.” And *urbs aeterna* occurs in several places, for example Tibullus; a similar phrase occurs in Livy (also a contemporary of Augustus). See Edwards 1996, 87, for details. The phrase was invoked far more often, however, in later centuries.
- 136 See the exemplary (if necessarily preliminary) studies included in Mutschler and Mittag 2008, for example.
- 137 Weber insisted in a posthumous paper that cities have “at least partial autonomy and autocephaly, thus also an administration by authorities in the election of whom the burghers participated” (and thus, by this standard, Rome was no urban community or city). I thank Christian de Pee for alerting me to this Weber quotation and for allowing me to see his forthcoming paper on this subject.
- 138 *Hanshu* 10.302; Dubs 1938–55, 2:373.
- 139 Shangguan 2009, treats Chengdi’s period as one where expenses were greatly reduced simply because there were no major wars. Table 1 in Gao Erwang 2012 (p. 33) shows how frequently Chengdi entertained *chanyu* at court (in 31, 20, 12, 8, and 7 BCE).
- 140 Xun Yue’s *Hanji* gives the backstory behind the abolition of the twenty-five “seldom-visited palaces” in the Shanglin Park, the abolition prompted by a memorial from Shao Xinchun (see above). See *Qian Hanji* 24.415–16.
- 141 See Chen Zhi 1980, 4.86–87. It is unclear whether the poor people then became part of the park administration or not; that they did seems likely. The *San Qin ji* (*Record of the Capital Area*), now in fragments, notes that that the park produced grain of such quality that fifteen stalks weighed 1 *sheng*; also the park produced great pears weighing 5 *sheng* each. As soon as they fell to Earth, they broke open (so bursting with juice were they). Those who picked the pears first brought bags to fill, and these were named “juicy” (lit., “filled with juice”). This is one more example of treating the park as a moneymaking venture.
- 142 For example, *Qian Hanji* 25.445 (for 20 BCE), like *Hanshu* 27B-shang.1368, has Gu Yong blaming Chengdi for “setting up private fields among the people and storing private slaves, carriages, and horses at the Northern Palace.” For a translation of the Gu Yong memorial, see the chapter by Liu Tseng-kuei in this volume.
- 143 In any case, we derive a very different picture for charity during Western Han than that supplied in Lewis 2009. As noted in Li Lingfu 2009, 202, Gong Yu wanted a lot of land in Shanglin Park to be given back to the neighboring peasants to farm. However, contrary to Li Lingfu’s account, it is not clear that Yuandi responded positively to Gong Yu’s memorial. Under Han Chengdi, we see the parklands’ distribution to the poor or commoners (ibid.). Long ago, such welfare provisions led one superb scholar to describe late Western Han as a “proto-welfare state.” See Hulsewé 1987. The great expense incurred by the imperial largesse was first mentioned, so far as I know, by Lü Simian (d. 1952) in his *Lü Simian dushi zhaji*, vol. 2, 598–600, 603–4. Mention was even made of “public birth houses” in Ying Shao’s *Fengsu tongyi*.
- 144 Compare *Shuoyuan*, *juan* 15, item 14 (“Kongzi Gives Advice to Lord Ai of Lu”).
- 145 He also gave five amnesties to condemned criminals, almost as many as all his predecessors combined (seven). See *Xi Han huiyao*, 630–31.
- 146 For the reductions—for example, those in 31 BCE—see *Hanshu* 10.305; Dubs 1938–55, 2:378. For loan forgiveness in 30 BCE, see *Hanshu* 10.306; Dubs 1938–55, 2:380. In 25 BCE, Chengdi also commanded that the indigent “be assisted with [government] loans.”
- 147 For example, in 19 BCE, Chengdi set up a grandson of a younger brother to continue a family

line that would otherwise have been extinguished; in 12 BCE, Chengdi enfeoffed a descendant of Xiao He as marquis; and in 8 BCE, Chengdi appointed Kong Ji, a descendant of Kongzi, to represent the Yin dynasty (not Kongzi's forebears) in state sacrifices. For further information, see Loewe 2004, 337.

148 Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, comments on Hongjia 3 (18 BCE).

PART 1

The Built Environment and Archaeology of Han Chang'an

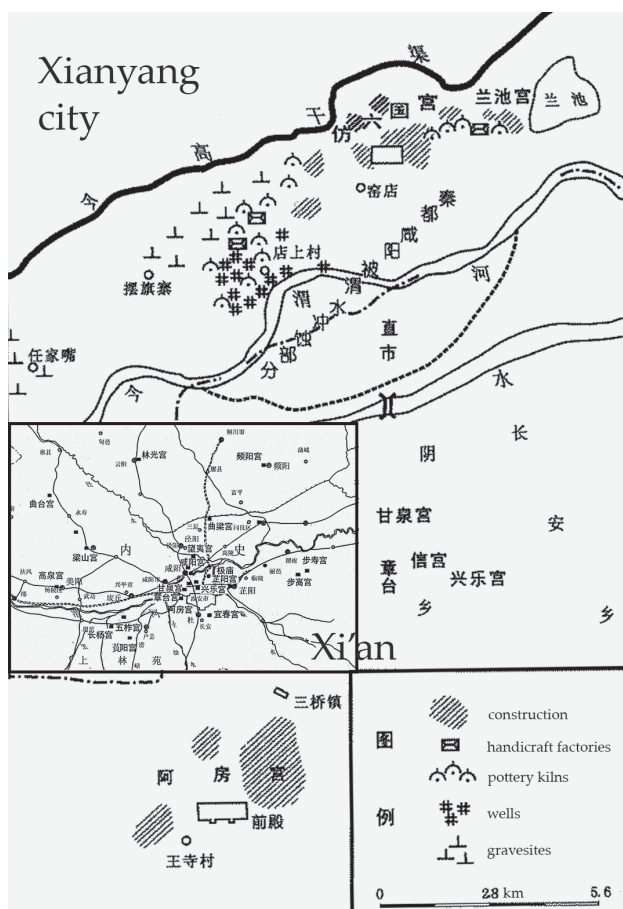
THE WESTERN HAN CAPITAL OF CHANG'AN WAS A CITY IN MOTION. BUILT on the vestiges of some Qin palace ruins, it evolved—sometimes in spurts, sometimes in small increments—as new sites were added and existing ones demolished or repurposed. While the city's perimeter walls and city gates served important defense and security functions, Chang'an city was renowned in its time for the constant flow of people, goods, and ideas that entered and left the capital. By late Western Han, in Chengdi's reign (33–7 BCE), the city's built environment, its palaces, roads, bridges, canals, altars, parks, and residential sites, extended far beyond the perimeter walls to the heavily populated mausoleum towns. And while the occupants of the palace complexes, “Grade A” mansions, and official compounds may have defined the capital in the histories, other residents of the capital—whether noble or common, official or nonofficial, registered or transient, merchant or outlaw—added to the hustle and bustle of the metropolitan area.

Part One in this book captures different aspects of this city in motion, drawing on a steadily growing body of archaeological evidence read against the very rich record of transmitted texts. Several chapters analyze Western Han Chang'an from the point of view of imperial capital construction, revealing structural parallels with imperial Rome, describing Chang'an's unique position within China's urban history, or considering the logistical difficulties entailed in ensuring a steady supply of clean water and fresh food to so many local inhabitants. Other chapters focus on networks of exchange or the possible import of the visual rhetoric found in mural tombs. The final two chapters focus on particular problems relating to the city: specifically, the antique controversies over Chengdi's decision to erect not one but two grand mausoleums for himself and modern debates over the probable allocation of space in the imperial capital.

The Evolution of Imperial Urban Form in Western Han Chang'an

Tang Xiaofeng 唐晓峰

THROUGHOUT WESTERN HAN, FROM THE TIME LIU BANG FOUNDED THE city in 202 BCE until Wang Mang wrested power from the dynasty in 9 CE, Chang'an underwent continual renovations, both large and small, as different emperors wrought changes to the city in response to shifting conditions and perspectives. However, a larger trend underlay all such changes: the capital gradually evolved from simply the emperor's place of residence to the symbolic center of the entire realm, and thus a sublimely realized apex not only of the urban hierarchy but also of the court and all civilized people. From the point of view of historical geography, it seems clear that the capital's urban space was elevated in dignity, as ideas matured about and at the imperial court. Over time, in four discrete stages—from (1) palaces alone to (2) palaces plus perimeter walls to (3) palaces, perimeter walls, and ritualized sites, and finally to (4) a fully ritualized city, complete with formal city axes—Chang'an edged closer to the unified structure deemed ideal by late Western Han thinkers. Thus was imperial power gradually inscribed in coherent fashion upon the whole of the capital city's architecture and space. In the end, imperial majesty required more than a specific site from which to articulate its claims; it needed a coherent structure premised on a single hierarchy of urban administrative seats.¹ This it gradually acquired through the continual redesigning and repurposing of urban space in the Western Han capital of Chang'an.



MAP 1.01 Qin Xianyang, based on reconstructions by Chinese archaeologists. Archaeologists have looked, in vain, for the perimeter walls that we would expect with any major city, not to mention the capital. What is evident is that the Qin capital was extending from its original main site north of the Wei River to sites well south of that river, far into locales that later would be incorporated into the Han capital and associated parklands. This map, reprinted in many sources—including Wang Xueli 1985, 54, fig. 2.2, and *Xi'an de lishi bianqian yu fazhan* 2003, 160, fig. 5.3—has been modified to include an inset indicating the location of Xianyang vis-à-vis Chang'an, based loosely on Wang Xueli 1985, 68. Major Qin palaces are indicated with palace or pagoda-like icons in the main map and by square blocks in the inset, which names palaces in Chinese.

A Look Back at Xianyang, the Qin Capital

By definition, highly centralized political systems demand that all power and authority be gathered unto themselves, imbuing both the emperor's person and the empire's capital with exceptional status. The short-lived Qin dynasty (221–210 BCE; Map 1.01), which unified the territory we now call China for the first time, possibly exhibited this urge toward centralization, even though the Qin capital at Xianyang at the time of Qin's downfall, shortly after 210 BCE, remained in some ways, from a modern vantage point, an “incomplete” capital.

Originally located on the north bank of the Wei River, the Qin capital at Xianyang began expanding southward during the reign of King Huiwen (r. 337–311 BCE), when the first work began on the site of the Epang Palace (which was never completed, as we now know).² Huiwen's successor King Zhaoxiang (r. 307–251 BCE) constructed two more “traveling palaces” south of the Wei River, Zhang Terrace and Xingle Palace, both of which were completed.³ After unification in 221 BCE, the First Emperor (Qin Shihuang, r. 247 BCE as king; 221–210 BCE as emperor) engaged in more large-scale

building projects south of the river, creating a virtually uninterrupted chain of palaces stretching on both sides of the river. As the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*) describes this, "He [the First Emperor] then had elevated walks and walled roads built to connect all the 270 palaces and scenic towers situated within 200 *li* [83 km] of Xianyang. He filled the palaces with magnificent screens and hangings, bells and drums, and beautiful women—all the usual trappings of power in his time."⁴

Xianyang's appearance changed drastically during the First Emperor's reign. More monumental palaces came to be built over a larger area throughout the entire Guanzhong region ("area within the passes"),⁵ thereby creating an unprecedented sense of visual space. As Jia Yi (201–169 BCE) described it in his "On Faulting Qin," the First Emperor "fortified Mt. Hua, making that mountain range [in effect] his city walls; he used the Yellow River for his capital's canals."⁶ (see Map 1.01) Qin rule, under the new emperor, was now "master of the six directions, using [locations as far distant as] the Ao and Hangu passes [at the edges of Guanzhong] for its palaces."⁷ In this way, the First Emperor's ever-expanding building projects were designed to impress all of his subjects with the superiority of his capital region over the other metropolitan centers of the empire, most of which were the former capitals of the newly conquered states. Possibly, the absence of city walls at Xianyang represented a powerful message that the unified realm no longer had enemies and thus did not need defensive walls.⁸

On the one hand, the string of Xianyang palaces made for a truly magnificent sight. On the other, the palaces also served as a dense network of fortifications designed to secure the emperor's person. Right after unification in 221 BCE, when the Qin empire was not yet entirely pacified, the First Emperor was still conscious of the need to maintain tight security measures, so some special policies were reportedly designed to increase security. Legend has it that huge magnets were installed at all the palace gates to detect concealed weapons.⁹ In addition, the First Emperor's journeys between his many palaces were supposedly kept a state secret, and in 212 BCE he decreed a sentence of death for "anyone revealing where the emperor was visiting at any particular moment."¹⁰ One possibly apocryphal story gives us a sense of the secrecy surrounding the emperor's person: Once, when the First Emperor was staying at his palace at Mount Liang, he saw from a tower the many carriages and horses in his Chancellor's entourage, and he expressed his disapproval. Naturally, when this was reported to the Chancellor, that official hurriedly reduced the number of carriages and horses. The First Emperor was furious when he learned that someone had leaked both his whereabouts and his words. When no one confessed to the crime, he executed every person who had attended him that day at Mount Liang.¹¹ From this we see that one of the goals of constructing so many palaces in the Xianyang area may well have been to provide the emperor with a number of places where he could avoid would-be assassins.

In the early years of the Qin empire, it seems to have been the palaces, and not the capital as a whole, that preoccupied the emperor. That the emperor relied on his walled palaces for security, and not on the great city itself, may explain the lack of prime-

ter walls around the capital, Xianyang being the only capital of those in the Central Plains without such walls. Perhaps because the emperor relied on his walled palaces for protection, the Epang Palace site was also called E City (E Cheng).¹² In any case, the emperor, once he left his palaces, was exposed to every sort of danger; hence his decision to install an extensive network of covered walkways and galleries linking the various palaces, which obscured his exact whereabouts and therefore kept him safe. Even though some commoners (e.g., palace servants) must have lived near or even within the palace complexes, strictly speaking the imperial space did not extend beyond the palace structures; thus we can speak of a theoretically complete separation between the living spaces allotted to the emperor and his intimates versus those inhabited by the emperor's subjects.¹³ Moreover, we can think of the greater metropolitan area around Xianyang under the First Emperor as a mere collection of grand palaces. Even though the Qin rulers had all along intended Xianyang to be a great capital, the layout of the metropolis betrayed no tangible expression of Qin greatness aside from the size and number of its palaces. Put another way, only the First Emperor's determination to construct many large-scale palaces spread over a vast area suggested the preeminence of the capital and the unprecedented dominance of Great Qin itself.

Needless to say, not all the palace complexes in Xianyang were considered of equal importance in the hierarchy of imperial spaces. Despite the spread of palaces south of the Wei River, the older palaces situated north of the river remained the true seat of the Qin court and its administration. When, for example, King Zhaoxiang received King Huai of Chu (r. 328–299 BCE) at the court's Zhang Terrace south of the river, this implied King Huai's lower status as a local vassal of the Qin king.¹⁴ By contrast, when in 227 BCE the assassin Jing Ke (d. 227 BCE) requested an audience with Ying Zheng, the future First Emperor (then the King of Qin) received him in full court regalia, with the greatest pomp and ceremony, in one of the Xianyang palace buildings north of the Wei, in recognition of the great significance that the king attached to the gifts Jing Ke brought to Xianyang: the severed head of General Fan Wuji and a map of the fertile Dukang region in Yan, implying surrender of the entire region to Ying Zheng.¹⁵ Apparently, however, some important policy discussions or ceremonies (e.g., Jing Ke's formal reception) may have taken place in the palaces north of the Wei River out of tradition more than conscious planning; for before and after unification in 221 BCE, Ying Zheng's policies in the main continued to follow precedent.¹⁶ Still, the advantages of building in the relatively open space south of the Wei were so obvious that the center of gravity was bound to shift southward within the Xianyang metropolitan area.¹⁷

Finally, in 112 BCE, a mere two years before his untimely death, the First Emperor supposedly issued a decree for the construction of a brand-new immense palace complex south of the Wei, with the idea that the main ceremonies and deliberations at the Qin imperial court would be moved there. As these plans would have initiated a new phase in the development of the capital city, had they been carried out, it is worth quoting the *Shiji* in full:

Thirty-fifth year [of his reign] (212 BCE). . . . The First Emperor felt that, in view of the large population of Xianyang, the palace of the former kings of Qin was too small. “I have heard,” he said, “that King Wen of the Zhou had his capital at Feng, and King Wu had his at Hao. The area between Feng and Hao is fit for the capital of an emperor or king.” He accordingly began construction of an imperial palace in the Shanglin Park south of the Wei River. First he [ordered] built a front hall at Epang which measured 500 *bu* [“steps”; about 115 cm total] from east to west and fifty *zhang* [about 116 m] from north to south, so that the upper part could seat 10,000 persons, and in the lower part flag poles five *zhang* high could be erected. It was to be surrounded by covered walkways which led directly from the hall to the Southern Mountains. The summit of the Southern Mountains was designated to be the watchtower for the [new] palace. An elevated walk was to extend from Epang north across the Wei River to connect the palace with Xianyang, in imitation of the way in which in the heavens a corridor leads from the Heavenly Apex Star across the Milky Way to the Royal Chamber Star.¹⁸

This polemical record, compiled by a critic a century after Qin’s downfall, may reflect the somewhat later ideas of that compiler. Moreover, the plan was clearly never implemented. However, had the plan been carried out, it would have represented a major shift in the urban geography of the “area within the passes,” in that the emperor’s plan supposedly envisioned a new “core area” of the capital extending north of the Wei River to the old pre-imperial Qin palaces, south to Epang, west to the Feng River, and east to the Xingling Palace built on the northern slope of the Longshou Mountains (Map 1.02). In other words, the plan as reported, not only would have meant a shift southward of the center of Qin’s capital city, but also implied the transformation of the haphazard collection of palaces scattered throughout the Guanzhong area. This proposed change was designed to exploit the major features of the surrounding landscape—historical, cultural, and natural—so as to construct a single, coherent, impressive urban layout. In the newly designated “core area,” the new Epang Palace site would have become the single nodal point linking north and south, with corridors tied to the Southern Mountains and covered walkways connected to the pre-imperial Qin palaces in the north, deliberately forming a single line.

In addition to these physical structures, a conceptual link was also planned, insofar as the built environment near and in the Epang Palace site was to imitate major features of the night sky. By such a method, Xianyang would have been catapulted to a place of extraordinary significance, a ritual symbol of the entire cosmos. Here, if the legends can be trusted, we finally detect the emergence of a more developed conception of a capital order, replacing the earlier loose assemblage of palaces. The Qin empire collapsed before any of these ambitious plans for Xianyang could be realized, however. Nonetheless, the First Emperor’s purported plans provide a first glimpse of an ideal capital on a truly imperial scale.



FIG. 1.01 Weiyang Palace, 2012, looking south from where the palace's Front Audience Hall once stood. Photograph by Tang Xiaofeng.

the realm, including the princes of the ruling Liu clan (see Vankeerberghen's chapter). As we will see, only in late Western Han did the emperors begin to refashion their capital as the ceremonial center and ritual representation of the entire realm.

At the time of its founding, Western Han Chang'an consisted mainly of two palace complexes, the Changle and Weiyang (both former traveling palaces of the Qin).²⁰ There was very little of anything we could dub "urban structure." Initially, imperial power was displayed mainly through the magnificence of the Weiyang Palace (Fig. 1.01; cf. Fig. 1.07), rather than in the capital city at large (i.e., the area that included the residential wards and markets, as well as the palaces).²¹ The relationship between the palaces, the larger city, and the greater metropolitan area was not well marked via urban forms, and the city's sites were allowed to develop without careful planning or preassigned meanings.

For the first decade or so of Western Han rule, the Changle and Weiyang Palaces together constituted, in shape and function, the "core area" of the capital, along with the road running north-south between the two palace complexes and the so-called Northern Palace, named for its location to the north. Between the Changle and Weiyang Palaces lay an Arsenal, whose weapons could be used to guard the emperor and the city. The Arsenal's construction, determined entirely by practical considerations, had no ritual or cosmological significance. To the north of these palace complexes, near the Wei River, were large areas where people lived, shopped, or worked. But in 192 BCE, during the third year of Huidi's reign (r. 195–188 BCE), a wall was built around Chang'an

and completed in two years, for security reasons.²² Insofar as the wall established a fixed boundary for the capital, the fact of its existence may have given court planners and architects new ideas about how to alter certain areas in the city. For example, in 189 BCE, Huidi built the new Western Market (Xi Shi) of Chang'an (significantly, within the boundaries set by the new Chang'an walls), when he ordered the repair of the Ao Granary far from Chang'an.²³

In this early period of Western Han, the heart of Chang'an's urban activities must have been in the city's northern section closest to the banks of the Wei River. There were practical and theoretical reasons for this. After all, the Wei was an important transport route. And since the Xiongnu threat came from the north, Chang'an's military defenses were concentrated on the city's northern, eastern, and western walls, rather than on the south.²⁴ According to theories contained in such works as Sima Zhen's *Shiji suo-yin*, Zhang Shoujie's *Shiji zhengyi*, and the unattributed *Sanfu jiushi* (*Old Matters of the Three Capital Regions*),²⁵ the Weiyang Palace's Northern Towergate (a.k.a. Main Gate) reflected an impulse to connect with the old Qin capital of Xianyang north of the Wei. The orientation of the Weiyang Palace, however, was due south, both to follow certain ritual precepts and to maximize the light and heat that entered the palace, a principle whose practical benefits had long been recognized by residents of the North China plain.²⁶ But because the area north of the Weiyang Palace bustled with activity, and this was also where imperial officials and nobles gathered before court audiences (many of them arriving from their mansions located north of the palace complex), it made sense for the Western Han court to build the first paired towergates on the north face of the Weiyang Palace, where the crowds were more likely to see them. In some sense, the areas south of the palace—mainly parklands—were initially seen as cultural and institutional backwaters devoid of urban interest. Only relatively late in Western Han Chang'an were important ritual sites built south of Chang'an, at which point the southward orientation grew in importance (see Tian's chapter).

According to one theory influential among Chinese historical geographers, five points along a north-south axis in Western Han Chang'an formed a 74-kilometer-long architectural baseline for the capital: (1) the Ziwu Valley in the Qinling Mountains, (2) the An City Gate, (3) a location in the very center of the Changling mausoleum complex constructed for the Han founder and his empress, (4) the Great Bend of the Qing River, and (5) the Tianqi Shrine.²⁷ With all of these sites located at 108°52' longitude east, we must take seriously the idea that this axis may have been in the court's mind as it planned the capital city (Fig. 1.02a-c), even if we lack sufficient evidence to verify the court's embrace of this device. According to this theory, part of the north-south axis maps onto the north-south thoroughfare that divides the Changle and Weiyang palace complexes. If this axis was intentional, rather than coincidental, then this north-south thoroughfare would have formed the earliest base point on the planned axis, judging from the dating of different buildings in the city,²⁸ and the second point along the axis would have gone through the precise center of the two burial mounds at the Changling

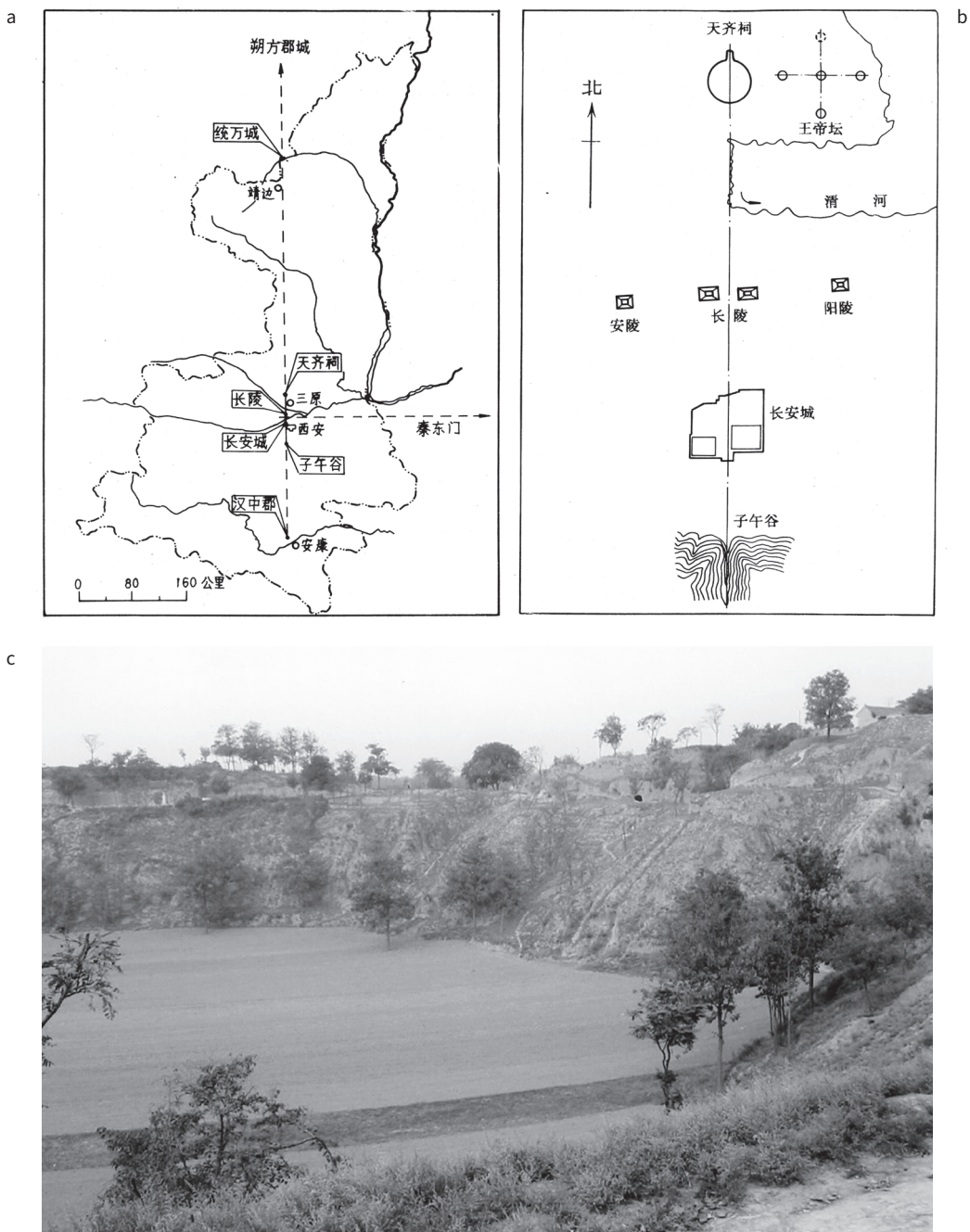


FIG. 1.02 (a) The axis connecting Western Han Chang'an with Ziwu Valley to the south and Tianqi Shrine to the north, with the long dotted arrow running from Hanzhong Commandery (south of the Qinling Mountains) toward Shuofang Commandery. (b) Section of the same axis from Ziwu Valley to Tianqi Shrine, as it runs between the Weiyang and Changle Palaces and between the emperor's and empress's tombs at Changling. Both images reproduced with permission from Qin, Zhang, and Yang 1995, figs. 1 and 5. (c) Tang Xiaofeng's photograph of the present-day remains of Tianqi Shrine, now seldom visited save by historical geographers.

imperial mausoleum, built shortly after Gaozu's death in circa 195 BCE. Because An City Gate was built later, when Huidi constructed a perimeter wall around Chang'an (192–190 BCE), this gate on the southern face of the Chang'an city perimeter wall would have constituted the third point along that axis. Regardless of the accuracy of this theory, setting the positions of the Chang'an city gates must have heightened awareness of a north–south axis.

Possibly, the location of these three points along an axis was carefully planned. Given the short distances involved, such planning would have been relatively easy. However, it is unclear whether the southward extension of this axis toward the Ziwu Valley or the northward extension toward the shrine at Tianqi could have been planned. Tianqi is 45 kilometers away from Western Han Chang'an, so aligning it with sites in Chang'an would have required measuring instruments and techniques of great precision, and it is doubtful that such technology was available at the time. Also, it is particularly hard to imagine Chancellor Xiao He wanting to align these three Chang'an sites with a mountain pass so far to the south. Thus, in my view, the alignment of Ziwu Valley on the north–south axis was probably entirely coincidental. Notwithstanding, by the end of Huidi's reign, this axial area stretching from the An City Gate to Changling was in place, making it the topographical embodiment of imperial power.

This axial area differed in two key respects from the central axes of the great capital cities of late imperial China, especially Beijing:²⁹ first, the central axis was not defined solely by imperial palaces ranged along the axis; second, in the capital a possible alternate orientation to the east may have complicated any focus on the central axis.³⁰ In Western Han, the axis merely consisted of thoroughfares, city gates, and towergates,³¹ and its impact perhaps was not huge because of this. Thus the practical functions attached to this north–south route outweighed its symbolic function. Then, too, the significance of the main east–west thoroughfare should have been more or less equal to that running north–south, because both thoroughfares had a single center lane reserved for the exclusive use of the emperor (*chidao*) and because the roads going west to the Wei River or east to two important mausoleum towns, Baling and Duling, were quite important. This means that the hypothetical north–south axis, if it existed at all, did not play as central a role in Chang'an's ideological landscape as did the central north–south axis in the capital housing the Forbidden City of Ming–Qing Beijing.

Liu Bang enjoyed his capital at Chang'an for only five years before he died. His successors Huidi, Empress Lü, Wendi, and Jingdi, reigned in Chang'an after him for seven, eight, twenty-three, and sixteen years, respectively. Throughout these reigns, the spatial arrangement of the imperial capital was generally focused on the Changle, Weiyang, and Northern palace complexes; on the Changling imperial mausoleum; and on the main roads and gates belonging to these sites. As an urban historian, I have coined the phrase “palace determinism” (*gongdian jue ding zhuyi*) to describe this spatial arrangement, insofar as the apportionment of space bluntly expresses the personal power and authority of the ruler residing in the palaces.

Construction in Chang'an during Wudi's Reign (141–87 BCE)

Before Wudi, the capital city at Chang'an had only three major palace complexes: Changle, Weiyang, and the Northern Palace. But since Wudi himself recognized the role of grand palaces and imperial display in maximizing the emperor's authority, he had several new complexes built in or near Chang'an, chief among them the Cassia, Mingguang, and Jianzhang Palaces.³² He almost doubled the area occupied by palace complexes and proportionally shrank the residential wards within the Chang'an city walls. Wudi was able to increase the number of imperial palaces in Chang'an so dramatically because Western Han power had grown commensurately, especially after Jingdi's speedy repression of the Seven Kingdoms Rebellion in 154 BCE. Because the Jianzhang Palace lay beyond the city boundaries formed by the perimeter walls of Huidi's Chang'an, Wudi may have thought this residence more important than Chang'an city itself, with its formal audience halls providing suitable settings for the court's activities. Located to the west of the capital's perimeter wall, the Jianzhang Palace connected with the Weiyang Palace via an elevated walkway that spanned the perimeter wall. Construction on the Jianzhang Palace ostensibly began in response to a magician's analysis of a fire, even if the palace eventually became a means to satisfy the emperor's cravings for luxuries and exotica, the conceit being that the palace was a miniature realm of the immortals. (In any case, the Jianzhang Palace contributed so little to the symbolic visual rhetoric of dynastic power that Wang Mang felt no compunction about destroying the palace as soon as he rose to power, thinking it a visual affront to a thoroughly ritualized capital city.) Around the same time as the construction of the Jianzhang Palace, Wudi built the Mingguang Palace, which merely added to Wudi's disregard of the city perimeter walls, since many former Chang'an residents were told to relocate outside the city walls.³³

Unlike the First Emperor, whose court near the end of his reign may have devised a plan to unify the overall structure of his capital, neither Wudi nor the members of his court seem to have believed that a single, coherent plan for the capital city was especially necessary or desirable. This does not mean, however, that ideology did not inform Wudi's vast building projects. While the fabulous Jianzhang Palace reportedly was built with the sole aim of increasing Wudi's life span—rather than elevating the power and authority of his dynasty³⁴—some legends have Wudi planning to build a Ming Tang, or Devotional Hall (conventional translation: Bright Hall), south of Chang'an at the outset of his reign.³⁵ (A Ming Tang was a ritual structure supposedly modeled on the structure that the Western Zhou kings had used to worship Heaven.)³⁶ If this Ming Tang was built (and not a later retrojection onto Wudi's era, as seems far more likely), it would have been the first building constructed in Chang'an whose design reflected the classicists' theories. However, judging from contemporaneous reports, the only Ming Tang completed during the reign of Han Wudi was a structure built years later at Mount Tai, hundreds of kilometers away from the capital, in the area now called Shandong; and it would *not* have been designed to honor the Zhou model.³⁷

Even though the members of Wudi's court discussed ideological concerns and Wudi

himself believed in the power of the spirits, few such ideas seem to have been embodied in the architecture of the capital. Instead, Wudi and his officials patronized and participated in sacrifices and ceremonies throughout a large area spread over nearly all of Wudi's vast realm; the cult sites he served included not only those close to his capital (e.g., Yong, Fenyin, Sweet Springs) but also altars erected to major mountains and rivers (see Map 10.01). Ideologically speaking, as far as Wudi and his court were concerned, his capital city in its parts or its whole was not appreciably more significant than his residences outside the capital when it came to the vital displays of imperial power and authority. During his last years, especially, Wudi conducted his business mainly from the Jianzhang Palace, outside the walls of Han Chang'an. So with Wudi often away and performing the principal imperial rituals outside the capital city walls, the capital city consisted mainly of unused or underutilized palace complexes. Thus as late as the long reign of Wudi, in mid-Western Han, the capital city appears first and foremost as a walled site housing a disparate set of imperial residences.

Chengdi's New Conceptual Basis for the Capital

Chengdi's reign (33–7 BCE) began fifty-five years after Wudi's death, by which time the classicists had become much more influential at court. On the advice of the classicist Kuang Heng, Chengdi abolished some sacrificial sites in the "area within the passes" and moved the worship of many gods to the immediate Chang'an suburbs (although Chengdi, fearing the wrath of the gods, reversed himself on this policy).³⁸ (See Tian's chapter in this volume.) In the classicists' vision, the capital became the primary site for the worship of all the gods of Heaven and Earth, which had two effects: a corresponding shrinkage in the imperial sacred space during Chengdi's reign and, concomitantly, an undeniable enhancement of the religious significance and ritual identity of the capital. The capital was well on its way to becoming the real ideological center of the empire.

From Chengdi's reign onward, the newly conceived capital city would symbolize at once the high position of the imperial clan, the apex of the imperial bureaucracy and its operations, the institutional setting for the court, and the ceremonial center of the entire realm. Whereas the palace buildings had previously dominated the visual field, from Chengdi's reign on, a number of prominent temples and altars began to make their appearance in or near the capital city, with the result that the imperial capital eventually came to represent a synthesis of the political and ceremonial systems.³⁹ While the ceremonial architecture could never compete with the imperial palaces in splendor or size, the ceremonial content of the various activities carried out at those ritual sites was intended to civilize and transcend the raw exercise of imperial power. Significantly, this new way of thinking about the capital meant that it was no longer necessary for the emperor to personally travel throughout his realm; instead, the various spirit powers once thought to dwell throughout the realm were convened and newly concentrated in Chengdi's capital, forging a single coherent symbolic system.

Accordingly, the greater metropolitan region centered on Chang'an became the place where displays of imperial power and ceremonial activities reached their most complete expression to date. As readers will recall, the capital region under the Western Han founder and his advisor Xiao He functioned mainly as the symbol of the emperor's personal power, whereas the capital city under Chengdi became the symbol of "all under Heaven," a solemn order sustained and propagated by the throne's edifying ritual conduct and embodying a higher-order set of ceremonies, beliefs, and ethical considerations.⁴⁰ No less interestingly, Chengdi's decision to add new worship sites to the great metropolitan Chang'an cityscape did not require him to visually align those additional sites with the older structures built in Western Han Chang'an; either Chengdi's court wanted a complete break with earlier visions of empire, or Chengdi's advisers thought they could convert the old sites to new symbolic uses through the performance of new ritual activities conducted by the classicizing emperor at the capital.

Basically, the classicists had persuaded Chengdi to reimagine his dynastic capital. By the classicists' plan, a site initially designed to demonstrate the ruling powers' military and political might was converted into a capital where there reigned supreme the rightful rulers sanctioned by Heaven's Mandate, in compliance with a time-tested rule of sagely governance.⁴¹ We cannot say much about this new vision of governance promoted by the classicists for the capital. The sources do not even name the precise location of the altars Chengdi commissioned in the suburbs to the city's north and south. And so a description of Wang Mang's constructions during his regency (4–9 CE) and subsequent reign (9–23 CE) may be useful here (Fig. 1.03), even though scholars today have no way of ascertaining whether the original motives that underlay Chengdi's changes to the city precisely coincided with those prompting Wang Mang to act. Lest we create a teleological narrative of Chengdi's reign, it is important to keep in mind that the sources only suggest that both sets of changes were propelled by the classicists' increasingly bold vision of imperial power and majesty. Especially relevant is the construction of a new (possibly the first) ritual axis for the Weiyang Palace complex.

Based on the few accounts dating to within a century or so of this period, as soon as Wang Mang assumed the post of regent (4–9 CE), he sought to rebuild parts of Chang'an so that it would more closely conform with the ideal capital city described in the "Kaogong ji" ("Record of Artisans"), which by then had become the final section of the *Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*).⁴² (That the *Rituals of Zhou*, among other classics, became the blueprints for Wang Mang's policies is well known.)⁴³ This record purported to describe the antique system according to a legend of a millennium earlier, under the good Zhou founding kings Wen and Wu. Wang, following late traditions attached to two other classics, the *Shi* (*Odes*) and the *Liji* (*Rites Record*), probably also considered converting the Weiyang Palace's Front Audience Hall into a Hall of the Royal Road.⁴⁴ Already the market north of the same palace conformed to the recommendation in the "Record of Artisans" that "the court face south with the market behind."⁴⁵ Wang Mang then moved the locations of the ancestral temples and the Altars to Soil and Grain

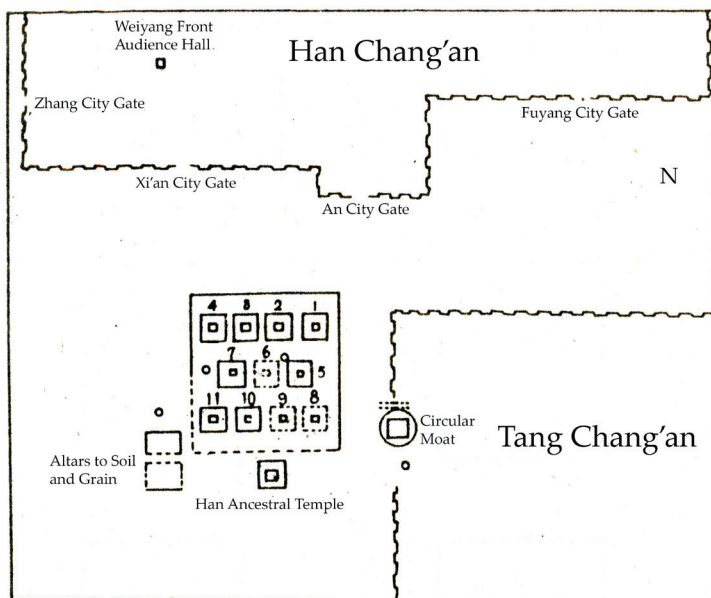


FIG. 1.03 Plan of Wang Mang's structures in the southern suburbs. After *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (1992).

outside the southern city perimeter walls, so that they, too, would conform with the “Record of Artisans” stipulation for the ideal city for putting “ancestors to the left and altars to the right.”⁴⁶ Meanwhile, according to early reports, Wang destroyed or dismantled more than ten sites at Wudi’s old Jianzhang Palace complex, so that he might reuse the timber and decorated roof tiles from those structures to build his Nine Temples.⁴⁷

The three major construction projects in the suburbs that Wang Mang directed on behalf of the Western Han house in its last days of rule correspond well to three recently excavated sites found in the southern suburbs of Chang’an that line up east to west: the so-called Circular Moat, where Heaven and Earth were worshipped by the emperor; the Temple to Remote Ancestors (usually identified in the sources as a kind of Ming Tang); and the twin Altars to Soil and Grain.⁴⁸ A straight axis leads directly north from the Xi’an City Gate into the Wei Yang Palace Front Audience Hall; also south through the site containing the Han imperial ancestral temple and the Altars to Grain and Soil, which were placed to the left and right of the axis, respectively, just as the “Record of Artisans” prescribes (see Fig. 1.03). The archaeological record seems to confirm, then, that the first instantiation of the “Record of Artisans” prescriptions came during Wang Mang’s regency.⁴⁹ The text says,

The Court Architect constructs the country’s capital, so that they are 9 *li* square on each side, with each side having three gates. Within the capital there are to be nine thoroughfares running north–south and nine running east–west. The thoroughfares running north–south are to be nine carriage tracks wide. On the

left [as one faces south, in other words, to the east] is the Ancestral Temple, and to the right [on the west] are the Altars of Soil and Grain. In front is the main Audience Hall and the markets are behind it.⁵⁰

Since at least the final decades of Western Han, then, classicizing traditions have listed this collection of features as the chief criteria for a “true” capital. Anything less has seemed a mere collection of palaces. Although the axis created during Wang Mang’s regency starts from the Weiyang Palace complex (as home of the emperor), it could hardly be more different from the early Western Han axis posited in the controversial “An City Gate axis” hypothesis mentioned above: whereas the Qin and early Western Han courts took the highways leading to and from Chang’an to be markers of imperial power, Wang’s plan concentrated all important activities at and near the imperial capital, where the emperor ritually held court and performed ceremonies on behalf of the realm. Certainly, it makes sense that Wang intended to strengthen his authority by adding ritual sites at which he would worship. Even setting aside the ritual functions of the buildings themselves, however, the visual arrangement of Wang’s new buildings would have evoked for all Han subjects the new ideological goals articulated by the circle of classicists supporting Wang. So whereas Wudi’s construction of the Jianzhang Palace complex outside the city walls was intended to increase his personal longevity, Wang’s construction of these ritual sites outside the city walls was designed to advertise his unwavering allegiance to the ideals of the true sage-kings, so as to propagate their powerful vision on behalf of all subjects under Wang’s pastoral care. Because ritual structures were to be the highest expression of this ideal of governance, the capital area was dedicated to the architectural instantiation of sagely rule by ritual.

Conclusion

Urban historians studying many early civilizations tend to regard the establishment of visual axes as one of the most important means to achieve what I call the “ritualization of the capital.” According to prevailing theories, this ritualization in turn marks the highest cultural achievement in the urban form of the capital. Awareness and implementation of these axes came about gradually, as noted above; and while imperial planners in late imperial China insisted that the north–south axis of the capital city run parallel to two of its outer perimeter walls, so as to reinforce their sense of urban symmetries, the Western Han planners apparently gave little thought to aligning their axis with the capital’s perimeter walls.⁵¹ Then, too, familiar features of later imperial capitals in China include a square outer city wall, with palace audience halls neatly lined up one after another, as well as a clear separation between the imperial audience halls and the residential areas within the palace. Both the capitals of the Qin and Western Han dynasties lacked these familiar features, however. During Qin and Western Han, some thought doubtless went into the individual geomantic siting of the palace complexes,

but it seems that comparatively little effort went into imagining the capital as center for the entire empire.⁵² In that respect, Western Han Chang'an may be similar to Rome, where the spatial organization of the city only gradually reflected more attention to creating a central axis.

Looking at the evolution of urban form in the Western Han capital of Chang'an, we see that the eventual development of an impressive full-blown imperial ideology went hand in hand with the evolution of the city's urban form. The founder of Western Han was already cognizant of the power of ritual performances, thanks to the Academician Shusun Tong's instructions; arguably, the luxurious style and scale of the Weiyang Palace complex were meant to convince others in Gaozu's realm of his power and might. But because all the early rituals took place either *inside* the palaces, with members of the court in attendance, or at points some distance from the capital city, the layout of the city itself and the imperial rituals seldom seemed connected.⁵³ Furthermore, imperial power early in Western Han rested on demonstrations of overwhelming military might and of the emperor's personal prestige. Later on, greater authority came to be invested in the emperor's body and the Han throne via the solemn performances of imperial rituals said to represent long-standing traditions inherited from the halcyon Western Zhou times.

Secondary works on Western Han Chang'an tend to overlook a crucial aspect of urban history and of empires if they fail to assess the significance of the capital's ritual structures in relation to its palace complexes. Of course, the physical layout of Western Han Chang'an changed continually throughout the dynasty—so much so that good scholars should specify *which* of the several capital cities located at Chang'an they are describing (see Fig. I.08a–c). Far too many publications continue to rely on a single standard map of the capital city (see Fig. I.01), but to speak of Western Han Chang'an as a fixed urban form is to ignore the fundamental historical realities, which are more interesting and complex than many realize.

Appendix: A Note on Wang Mang's Rise to Power (prepared by Michael Nylan)

In 1 BCE, during the reign of the child Pingdi (then eight or nine years old), the Empress Dowager Wang still issued edicts in the boy emperor's name (*lin chao cheng zhi*), but she virtually "entrusted the government" (*wei zheng*) to Wang Mang by August of that same year (*Hanshu* 99A.4044). But the empress dowager was independent enough to object to some of Wang's plans, so Wang at that point did not yet have an entirely free hand (*ibid.*). An edict appointed Wang Mang in 1 CE to the post of Lord Securing the Han (*Hanshu* 99A.4046), and soon after a second edict (whose text Wang had crafted, allegedly) issued by the empress dowager handed over special plenary powers to Wang, including all powers of appointment to court on the excuse that the empress dowager's age and elevated position made it "improper for her to supervise unimportant matters" (*Hanshu* 99A.4049). In June 4 CE, further honors were heaped on Wang, naming him

the *zaiheng*. This raised him to a position above the other two members of the Executive Council, though it was clearly stated that those honors were not to be inherited by his sons; he was spoken of as a latter-day Yi Yin or Duke of Zhou (*Hanshu* 99A.4066–67). Wang Mang took sole power (*ju she*) in 6 CE (*Hanshu* 99A.4081).⁵⁴ For quite some time, then, Wang served as virtual regent, though it took him a full seven years to assume sole power over the government.

As questions have long been raised about the reliability of the *Hanshu* account, we can only say at this remove that Wang's rise to supreme power was hardly inevitable, especially when seen from the vantage point of the reign of Chengdi and his successor. Several times, the *Hanshu* tells us, Wang was afraid for himself or exiled. For further information, see Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary*. We are moreover told that Wang conceived the desire to seize power *after* the reign of Aidi (*Hanshu* 99A.4065), who died in 1 BCE. This makes sense, because Aidi acceded to the throne as a young adult already equipped with his own views on policy making and the leading court figures. However, under Pingdi, a young child, Wang Mang must have found it far easier to arrogate powers to himself; and under Pingdi's successor, "the babe in arms" as he was called (*ru zi* 孺子), who was titular emperor from 6 to 9 CE, easier still.

Notes

- 1 Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010; cf. Xiao 2012.
- 2 Sanft 2008.
- 3 The term "traveling palace" (*xing gong, li gong*) refers to any palace where the emperor resides temporarily (as opposed to his main residence), even if the palace lies within the city walls of the capital. See *Yonglu*, *juan* 1, 24.
- 4 *Shiji*, trans. Watson 1993b, 57 (modified).
- 5 For the definition of Guanzhong, see *Yonglu*, *juan* 1, 3–4; cf. Nylan's introduction in the current volume.
- 6 *Shiji* 6.281, trans. Watson 1993b, 79 (modified).
- 7 *Shiji* 6.282, trans. Watson 1993b, 80.
- 8 See *Shiji* 99.2720, where Shusun Tong equates "breaking down city walls" with "the achievement of unity. Similar remarks can be found in the "Yuan Dao xun" chapter of the *Huainanzi* (discussing the ancient sage-ruler Yu) and in the "Guo ci" chapter of the *Mawangdui Jingfa*. But Xu Weimin 2010, 146, notes that earlier Qin capitals had no perimeter walls, unlike those in Chu (Liu Bang's homeland).
- 9 The post-Han *Sanfu huangtu* (fourth century CE?) asserts that there were such magnets at a gate near Epang. According to Xu Weimin 2010, 137, scholars debate the existence and location of that gate. *Yonglu*, *juan* 1, 18, describes a Magnet Gate (Cishi Men) built at Epang, saying that the magnetized gate was supposed to defend against concealed weapons carried by the Xiongnu; hence its alternate name, Resist Xiongnu Gate (Que Hu Men).
- 10 *Shiji* 6.257, trans. Watson 1993b, 57.
- 11 Ibid. This incident is dated to 212 BCE, nine years after unification, when construction on Epang was supposedly begun. The Chancellor at that time was Li Si.
- 12 The Epang Palace is called E City in a passage from *Kuodi zhi*, cited in *Shiji* 6.256; it is also called this in *Hanshu* 65.2847. Yan Shigu (581–645 CE) explains that the name E City is an allusion to the

height and thickness of its perimeter walls. Cheng Dachang's *Yonglu* insisted that these palace complexes only had perimeter walls around each palace, with no second layer of perimeter walls. Only more archaeological excavations will reveal whether Cheng Dachang was right.

- 13 In Western Han, as in Qin, the protection offered by the palaces was a prime concern. Indeed, the walls of the Changle Palace were up to 20 meters thick, thicker than the wall around Chang'an. See Liu Yunyong 1982, 36.
- 14 *Shiji* 40.1728. (Naturally, this treatment infuriated the King of Chu.)
- 15 *Shiji* 86.2534. The severed head of General Fan had long been coveted by the king.
- 16 Cf. Nylan, forthcoming b.
- 17 Shi and Xin 1991, 73–118.
- 18 *Shiji* 6.256, trans. Watson 1993b, 55–56 (modified).
- 19 Ban Gu, “Western Metropolis” *fu*, trans. Knechtges 1982, 1:103, line 41; cf. *Hou Hanshu* 40A.1336.
- 20 Editors’ note: Mentions of “palace(s)” in this chapter refer to the entire palace complex, not just the most important building after which the entire site is named.
- 21 *Shiji* 8.385–86, trans. Watson 1961, 1:79 (modified): “The chancellor Xiao He had been put in charge of the building of the Weiyang Palace, constructing the Eastern Towergate (Dong Que) and the Northern Towergate (Bei Que), the Front Audience Hall (Qian Dian), the Arsenal (Wu Ku), and the Great Storehouse (Tai Cang). When Gaozu returned from his expeditions and saw the magnificence of the palace and its towers, he was extremely angry. He said to Xiao He, ‘The empire is still in great turmoil, and though we have toiled in battle these several years, we cannot tell yet whether we will achieve final success. What do you mean by constructing palaces like this on such an extravagant scale?’ Xiao He replied, ‘It is precisely because the fate of the empire is still uncertain that we must build such palaces and halls. A true Son of Heaven takes the whole world within the four seas to be his family. If he does not dwell in magnificence and beauty, he will have no way to manifest his authority, nor will he leave any foundation for his heirs to build upon.’ With these words, Gaozu’s anger turned into delight.”
- 22 For the wall, see *Shiji* 9.398. Many scholars, starting with the anonymous compilers of the *Sanfu huangtu*, have assumed that the winding shape of the northern and southern walls around Chang'an imitated stellar constellations, whereas others have maintained that such explanations were added ex post facto. Even though there is no direct proof for any of these positions, I support the latter view. It is significant, for example, that neither Ban Gu nor Zhang Heng, in their *fu* about Chang'an, mentioned the Northern or Southern Dipper. For the continuing controversy, see Zhang Jihai 2006, 5–23, though Zhang has since changed his mind, according to a personal communication. Cf. Wang Shejiao 2001; Liu Rui 2011, 46–57; Hotaling 1978.
- 23 *Hanshu* 2.91, trans. Dubs 1938–55, 1:184; cf. Liu Qingzhu 2006, 44.
- 24 See *Shiji* 110.2904, trans. Watson 1961, 2:148 (modified): “He [Jingdi] also stationed three armies, at Xiliu, to the west of Chang'an, at Jimen, north of the Wei River, and at Bashang, so as to be prepared for the Xiongnu, in case they entered that area.”
- 25 Sima Zhen states that “the old locations of the Qin ruling house were all north of the Wei. That he [Gaozu] established an Eastern Towergate and a Northern Towergate must have been for convenience.” According to Zhang Shoujie, the *Shiji* commentator, “The Northern Towergate was the main [formal] gate (*zheng*), hence, with the establishment of a Front Audience Hall they modeled themselves after Qin, making the connection with Xianyang across the Wei.” Both opinions are in the comments attached to the passage from *Shiji* 8.385–86 quoted above. According to the *Sanfu jiushi* (*Chuxue ji*, *juan* 6, 135), “The Han capital was south of the Wei River, and the Northern Towergate was built to face the Wei River, as north of the Wei lay the [Han] imperial mausoleums.” Liu Rui 2011, 11, insists that under Wendi the Eastern Towergate was also called a “main gate.”

- 26 For another view, see Liu Rui 2011.
- 27 Qin Jianming et al. 1995:3, 4.
- 28 NB: The actual north–south thoroughfare lies slightly to the east of the axis mentioned in this influential theory, in between the Changle Palace and the Arsenal. Later An City Gate was constructed on this road. See Fig. 1.08b, for further information.
- 29 Regarding the central axis in a Chinese capital, the capital of Ming–Qing Beijing is regarded as the “most standard” model, as the most important halls and palaces of the Forbidden City are built on this axis, including the Hall of Supreme Harmony, Hall of Middle Harmony, Hall of Protecting Harmony, Palace of Heavenly Purity, the Hall of Union, and the Palace of Earthly Tranquility.
- 30 For a possible eastern orientation of the capital coexisting or not with the central axis, see Liu Rui 2011, pt. 1, esp. 1–63, which argues that there were two orientations (first to the east and gradually more to the south), but these did not always allow for a clearly defined central axis.
- 31 Contrast the situation in Qin, where, according to *Shiji* 6.241, cited in *Yonglu*, *juan* 2, 39, a single road ran from the Pole Temple (Ji Miao), Lishan, the burial site of Qin Shihuang; another from the Front Audience Hall of the Sweet Springs Palace (Ganquan Gong) to Xianyang. Xu Weimin 2000, 123ff., notes various opinions regarding the location of the Qin Ganquan Palace.
- 32 As with any person to whom power is imputed, it is difficult to tell how much done during Wudi’s reign can be traced to his own initiatives and how much to the members of his court. Reference to “Wudi” therefore stands for “Wudi and/or unidentified members of his court.” Michael Loewe is one of several scholars who have stressed how little power Wudi actually may have had, given the powerful consort clans that dominated much of his reign.
- 33 One could plausibly argue that Wudi’s construction of his own imperial mausoleum right across the Heng Bridge at Maoling also stretched the limits of Chang’an city to the suburbs across the Wei River. The string of imperial mausoleum sites and towns surrounded Chang’an like “a wall of protective stars,” according to Ge Jianxiong 1986, *passim*.
- 34 *Shiji* 28.1402, trans. Watson 1961, 2:49.
- 35 *Shiji* 28.1384, trans. Watson 1961, 2:24, says only that Wudi “*wished to begin discussions* on the establishment of a Ming Tang south of the capital” (*italics mine*). Some scholars, knowing this passage, have erroneously concluded that such a Ming Tang was built.
- 36 Tseng 2011, 18–21.
- 37 *Shiji* 12.480–81, 28.1401, trans. Watson 1993b, 47–48. In any case, this Ming Tang would have had little to do with the *classicists*’ theories, given that it was supposedly modeled after a plan in use at the time of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi), a fact not noted in Tseng 2011.
- 38 *Hanshu* 10.323, 329.
- 39 By “temples and altars,” I refer to the altars to Heaven and Earth, the altars to the gods of Grain and Soil, and also the Imperial Ancestral Temple. Under Chengdi, new temporary sites must have been built for these rituals; during Pingdi’s reign, permanent sites were constructed (see Tian Tian’s chapter).
- 40 On the advice of Liu Xiang, Chengdi also made plans to establish a Circular Moat (Biyong) south of Chang’an, though these plans were never carried out. See *Hanshu* 22.1033–34.
- 41 See Ōkushi Atsuhiko 1992.
- 42 For the dating of the “Kaogong ji,” see *ECT*, 25; and Nylan 2001, chap. 4. In Asian languages, see Ikeda Suetoshi 1981, 2:1165–77; Peng Lin 1991; Shi Jingcheng 1971; Li Yaming 2007; Cheng Yuanmin 1985; also Li Feng 1999.
- 43 Elman and Kern 2010.
- 44 See the “Yu cao” chapter of the *Liji* (chap. 13, sec. 2); and Mao Odes 300, citing passages describing the Roadside Chamber (Lu Qin) in those revered texts. Cf. *Hanshu* 99B.4103.
- 45 *Zhouli* 7/13b, 41/36b, in e-SKQS; cf. *Zhouli zhushu* 7/16a, 41/25a (“Jiangren” section). A chart in Ma Hsien-hsing 1976, 258, compares the features of the “Kaogong ji” with those of Western Han

Chang'an. Of nine stipulations for the ideal capital recorded in the "Kaogong ji," originally only one feature corresponded to the actual capital: that there be four walls, with three gates to the side.

- 46 In Chang'an, south of the remains of the Weiyang Palace complex, archaeologists found the remains of large-scale ritual structures outside what used to be known as Xi'an City Gate. The easternmost remains have been called Wang Mang's Nine Temples, and they include what scholars presume to have been ancestral temples. The remains to the west are said to be the Altars to Grain and the Soil. See n. 45, "Jiangren" section; and Wang Entian 2006. (The substance of Wang's article was originally published in *Kaogu yu wenwu* 1992, no. 4, 96–111.)
- 47 *Hanshu* 99C.4162. Archaeologists have found more than nine foundations for ritual sites; "nine" may just mean "many."
- 48 Wang Entian 2006. Another name for the Biyong is Huan Qiu (Circular Hill). NB: Wang Mang also extended the facilities at the Northern Palace (inside the city walls) which housed Aidi's grandmother, the Queen Dowager Fu (Fu Taihou).
- 49 That Wang Mang appreciated the performance value of public or semipublic spectacles is suggested by an early anecdote. In it, the regent Wang Mang in 4 CE ordered experts in the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*) traditions be installed in all district and village schools. At sacrifices in the schools, someone was to perform the roles of Gaozu, the Han founder, and his successor Wendi. The *Classic of Filial Piety* thus became a theatrical script, as the Han imperial ancestors and lords became actors under the direction of Wang Mang, the idea being to merge all religious ideals into a single accessible model. Wang clearly began consciously imitating the Duke of Zhou, calling himself the "Duke who Secured the Han." See *Weishu jicheng*, juan 496 ("Li Han wenjia"), in Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92.
- 50 *Zhouli zhushu* 19/1a ("Xiaozong bo" section).
- 51 The attempt to enforce this symmetry between the areas inside and outside the perimeter walls only started in post-Han times, with the Wei dynasty's (220–265 CE) capital of Ye, and it reached full development in Tang (618–907 CE) Chang'an. The move to Luoyang in Eastern Han cannot be explained by the Eastern Han rulers' desire to more effectively implement the classicists' ideas about the ideal capital; the move was instead dictated by practical considerations, and Luoyang had no central axis whatsoever. But see Yi Feng's attempts in 46 BCE to move the capital to Luoyang, on what Michael Loewe calls "ideological" grounds. *Hanshu* 75.3175 and *CHOC*, 199. Luoyang may not have corresponded to classical ideals, in other words, but that did not stop many, including Ban Gu, from attributing ideological motives to the move away from Chang'an.
- 52 It is possible that the so-called Western Zhou "capitals" of Feng and Hao were not permanent capitals, but rather temporary residences of the Zhou ruling family. Perhaps only around the time of the *Bohu tong* discussions in Eastern Han (79 CE) was the definition of "capital" firmly fixed.
- 53 Tonio Hölscher's work has shown that not until Augustan Rome did any leader use the monuments of the city as effective backdrops for ritual activities proclaiming imperial power.
- 54 For the particularly negative connotations of the phrase *ju she*, see Nylan's chapter in Elman and Kern 2010.

2

Chang'an and Rome

STRUCTURAL PARALLELS AND THE LOGICS OF URBAN FORM

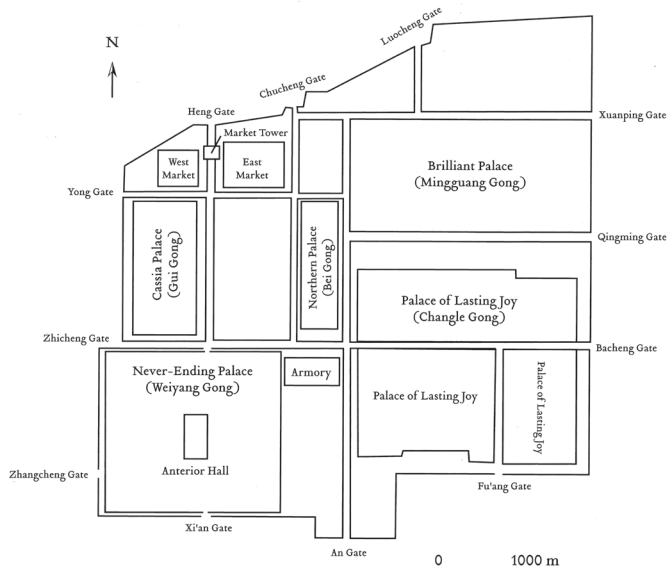
Carlos F. Noreña 羅瑞達

IN COMPARING THE CITY OF ROME DURING THE EARLY IMPERIAL PERIOD—let us say, for the sake of convenience, in the first century CE—to the city of Chang'an during the latter part of the Western Han period (i.e., the first century BCE), it is easy enough to identify major differences in the cityscapes of these two imperial capitals. Whereas Rome was a city of temples, colonnaded squares, and large complexes devoted to public entertainment and urban leisure, characterized, especially in its residential topography, by the absence of a central plan, Chang'an was a city defined by its imposing circuit of perimeter walls, dominated by a series of monumental palace complexes (themselves walled), served by centrally organized markets (also walled), and articulated by an orderly grid system.¹ From these and other apparent differences between the two cities, it would be tempting to draw any number of inferences about the respective societies, cultures, and political systems in which they were embedded and to conclude on this basis that the worlds of Western Han Chang'an and early imperial Rome were fundamentally alien from one another. But a closer look at the city of Rome in comparison with Chang'an, from both a functional and symbolic perspective, will suggest that many of the seemingly obvious contrasts between the two cities have either been exaggerated or misunderstood. In most cases, the defining features of Chang'an's urban fabric are paralleled, in structural terms, in early imperial Rome. Even more important than any one point of comparison, however, are the "logics of urban form" in the two cities, which were more similar than different.

It should be stressed from the outset that the comparison undertaken in this chapter is period specific. Both Chang'an and Rome had long and varied histories, and comparisons between the cities at different periods would naturally produce different results from those offered here (see below in this chapter). Analysis of the late Western Han period in Chang'an is determined by the chronological focus of this volume, the reign of the emperor Chengdi (33–7 BCE). Founded as a new capital city by the first emperor of Han, Gaozu (r. 206–195 BCE), Chang'an had undergone more than 150 years of urban development and was reaching its urban zenith at the accession of Chengdi. Chengdi's reign has not received much critical attention in modern scholarship, but it was in fact an axial moment in the evolution of the Han empire, as several chapters in this volume demonstrate. The justification for concentrating on early imperial Rome is that this was the period in that city's history in which it was most analogous, both structurally and symbolically, to the Chang'an of the late Western Han period. For this, too, was an axial moment, as the republican form of government in Rome, which had stretched back some five hundred years, was being replaced by a monarchy under the first emperor Augustus (r. 27 BCE–14 CE) and his successors, with the result that the sovereignty of the *populus Romanus* (Roman people, i.e., the Roman citizen body) became effectively subordinated to the will of a single ruler. And it was really only during this period, for reasons that will become clear below, that the city of Rome can be meaningfully compared with Chang'an, above all because of the dynamic convergence in both cities between political systems, ideologies, and the production of urban space.

Structural Parallels in the Cityscapes of Chang'an and Rome

The defining urban features of Western Han Chang'an are clearly visible on the basic plan of the city from that period (see Plan of Han Chang'an). Especially prominent are the exterior walls, palaces, markets, major avenues, and Arsenal (also called the Armory). Though less clear from this overview plan, the city was also shaped by its dense concentration of wards and by a lattice of interior walls that controlled access to the palaces, markets, and even the wards. Finally, outside the city walls but intimately connected with the city itself were the imperial parklands of Shanglin and the cluster of imperial tombs erected on the outskirts of the capital city. Each of these defining urban features of Chang'an was paralleled in one way or another in early imperial Rome (Fig. 2.01). I would emphasize that we are not dealing here with any neat, one-to-one correspondences. Instead, what we find in the cityscape of early imperial Rome are urban features that served similar functions, practically or symbolically, to those that defined Chang'an. Let us consider several of these urban features in turn—the palaces, the exterior and interior walls, the markets, the Arsenal, and Shanglin Park—with particular attention to similarities or parallels in the city of Rome.



Plan of Han Chang'an, giving English renderings for the palace but no dates for the construction of the various palaces. After Barbieri-Low 2007. Note that we have not translated the Chang'an palaces as per Barbieri-Low, but for many people his translations represent the standard.

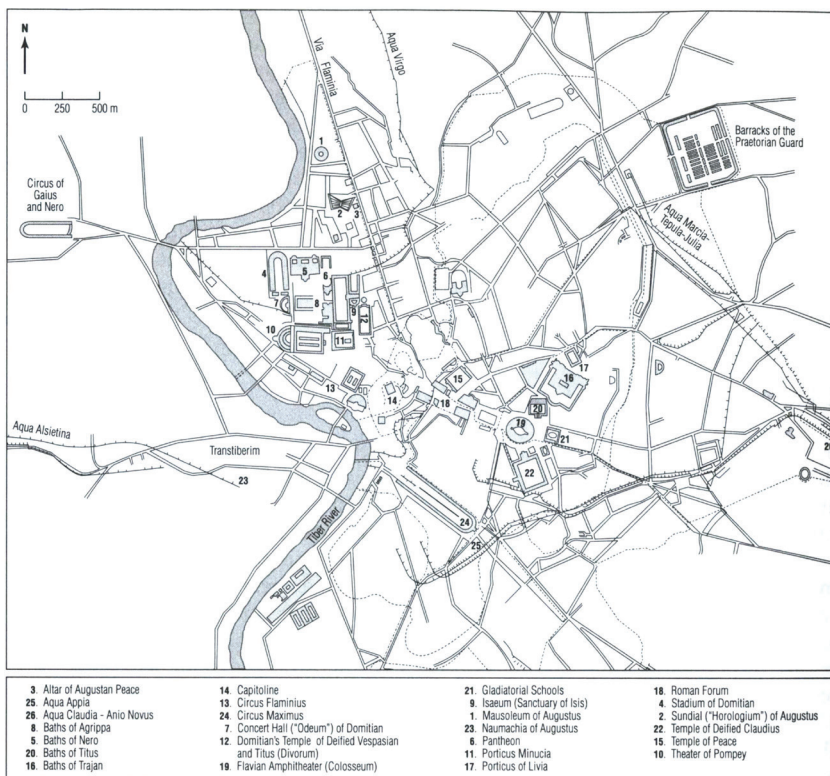


FIG. 2.01 Plan of imperial Rome, circa 100 CE. Reproduced with permission from Boatwright, Gargola, and Talbert 2004, 384, map 11.3.

Chang'an was a city of palaces.² Three gigantic and two smaller (but still immense) palace complexes dominated the area within the exterior walls, the five palaces together taking up no less than two-thirds of the available space within the walls. The five palaces range widely in chronological, spatial, and functional terms. Chronologically, the Changle Palace was constructed under Gaozu and built atop an earlier Qin palace, while the Mingguang Palace was constructed under the emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BCE). Spatially, the massive Changle Palace compound enclosed roughly 6 square kilometers (itself occupying about one-sixth the total area of the city), and the Cassia Palace, also constructed under Wudi, enclosed roughly 1.6 square kilometers. And functionally, there were complexes devoted mainly to the living quarters of the heir apparent and imperial consorts (Northern Palace and Cassia Palace) and other members of the imperial family, especially the empress dowager (Mingguang Palace and Changle Palace, with Changle serving additionally as an important center of political activity, reflecting the influence of the empress dowager); and there was the Weiyang Palace complex, built under Gaozu and adjacent to the Changle Palace, which was not only the chief imperial residence in Chang'an but also a multipurpose structure geared toward public rituals (especially receptions held in the grandiose Audience Hall), administration (including archives), and palace maintenance (workshops)—and all on a scale that provoked some anxiety even in the founder Gaozu himself.³ These palace compounds were each surrounded by a series of ramparts (11 meters high along the surviving section of the wall surrounding the Weiyang Palace) and accessed by monumental doors, gates, and towergates.⁴

Though the city of Rome in the first century CE was not a “palace town” like Chang'an, it was the primary residence of the emperor throughout the early imperial period and in fact had a monumental palace complex for the emperor in the heart of the city.⁵ Built atop the Palatine Hill, long the residential quarter par excellence for Rome's political elite, the complex of buildings that we may call, for the sake of convenience, “the imperial palace,” towered over the Circus Maximus, Forum Boarium, and Forum, Rome's symbolic center, and dominated the city's skyline from many different perspectives (Fig. 2.02).⁶ The central core of the imperial palace was a massive two-story structure known as the *Domus Augustiana* (or *Augustana*), which contained multiple reception rooms, grand halls, colonnaded courtyards, gardens and fountains, banqueting halls, a hippodrome, residential spaces, and assorted multipurpose rooms, the whole complex decorated with statues, artworks, and an assortment of opulent building materials, especially colored marbles imported from every corner of the Mediterranean world. Built mainly under the emperor Domitian (r. 81–96 CE) and continuously enhanced by his successors (especially Septimius Severus, r. 193–211 CE, whose extension to the southeast almost constituted a whole new palace in its own right), the *Domus Augustiana* stood as a towering expression of the emperors' centrality, authority, and power. Immediately adjacent to this complex was a separate monumental palace structure,

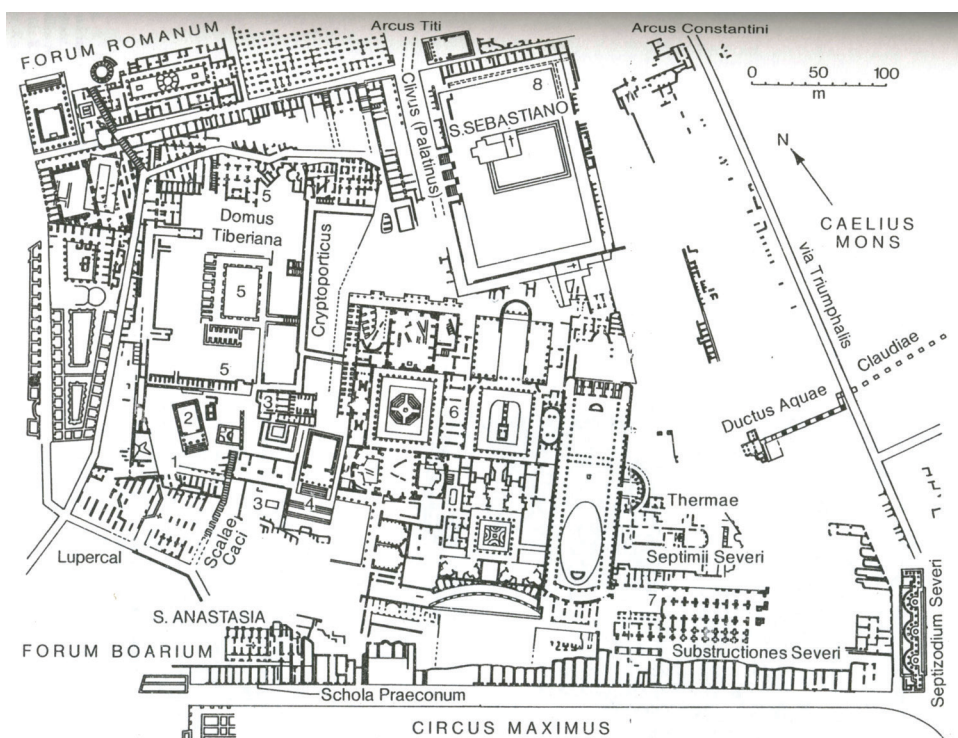


FIG. 2.02 Plan of the Palatine Hill in Rome. Reproduced with permission from *LTUR*, 4:417, fig. 7.

known as the Domus Tiberiana, initiated under the emperor Tiberius (r. 14–37 CE) and enlarged by several of his successors, which extended the imperial compound on the Palatine Hill all the way down to the Forum square—under the emperor Gaius (r. 37–41 CE), in fact, the Temple of Castor in the Forum was effectively converted into a vestibule to the palace.⁷ Together, the Domus Augustiana and the Domus Tiberiana served as the principal setting in the city of Rome for all activities associated with the Roman imperial court, including receptions, banquets, and administration (i.e., imperial decision making), and provided a suitably grand residence for the emperor and the imperial family.⁸ In structural terms, therefore, the imperial palace complex on the Palatine Hill functioned in a manner analogous to the five palaces in Chang'an.

In addition, for a brief phase during the reign of the emperor Nero (r. 54–68 CE), the city of Rome was on the brink of becoming a true “palace town,” very much akin to Chang'an. For it was under Nero that a vast new imperial residence and pleasure park, the Domus Aurea (Golden House), was inserted into Rome's cityscape, occupying the entirety of the Oppian and Velian Hills; the valley between the Oppian, Caelian, and Palatine Hills; and, through its (uncertain) connections with the Domus Augustiana, the entire Palatine Hill as well.⁹ The imperial biographer Suetonius, writing in the second century CE, provides the following description:

The entrance hall was large enough to contain a huge statue of himself [i.e., the emperor Nero], 120 feet high; and the pillared arcade ran for a whole mile. An enormous pool, like a sea [*stagnum maris*], was surrounded by buildings made to resemble cities, and by a landscape garden [*rura*] consisting of ploughed fields, vineyards, pastures, and woodlands, where every variety of domestic and wild animal roamed about. Parts of the house were overlaid with gold and studded with precious stones and mother-of-pearl. All the dining rooms had ceilings of fretted ivory, the panels of which could slide back and let a rain of flowers, or of perfume from hidden sprinklers, shower upon his guests. The main dining room was circular, and its roof revolved, day and night, in time with the sky. Sea water, or sulphur water, was always on tap in the baths. When the palace had been decorated throughout in this lavish style, Nero dedicated it, condescending to remark, “Good, now I can at last begin to live like a human being.”¹⁰

Centered on a residential complex on the Oppian Hill, the Domus Aurea was especially notable for bringing the architecture and rural aesthetics of a villa estate into the city—and for occupying such a large portion of the city (which had been cleared out by a major fire in 64 CE).¹¹ The Domus Aurea was quickly dismantled by Nero’s successors, and much of the land was symbolically returned to “the people” (especially in the form of the Colosseum; see below in this chapter), but for a brief moment in the first century CE, a significant portion of Rome’s urban landscape was taken over by a set of overlapping palace complexes controlled by the emperor, similar both in function and even in scale to those that dominated Chang’an.

EXTERIOR WALLS

Constructed during the reign of the emperor Hui (194–187 BCE), the city walls of Chang’an measured 25,700 meters in perimeter—7,600 and 7,200 meters across the south and north sides, respectively, 6,000 and 4,900 across the east and west—enclosing an area of roughly 36 square kilometers.¹² They were built of rammed yellow earth and stood some 12 meters high, with an average thickness at its base of between 12 and 16 meters. The circuit of walls, reinforced by an exterior moat, was roughly square in shape and was pierced on each of the four sides, according to traditional urban principles (as outlined in the “Record of Artisans”), by three monumental gates with towers. That the slightly irregular shape of the circuit was meant to mirror the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor is no longer accepted.¹³ The labor required to construct the walls was costly and time-consuming, the result a massive and imposing fortification that must have made a deep impression on visitors—even if, as we now suspect, the built-up area of the city spilled outside these exterior walls.¹⁴

By contrast, the city of Rome during the early imperial period could hardly be called a “walled” city. Indeed, contemporary authors emphasized that for its defense, Rome

relied not on walls but on men; one, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, even proclaims the walls “hard to find.”¹⁵ But that does not mean that early imperial Rome was actually a “city without walls.” From at least the mid-fourth century BCE, in fact, a large portion of the city was surrounded by a perimeter of walls, originally defensive in purpose, that measured some 11,000 meters. According to the dominant Roman tradition, this circuit was constructed by the king Servius Tullius (traditional dates: r. 587–535 BCE) and so is known to modern scholars as “the Servian Wall,” but in fact it was built with local tufas that date from the fourth century BCE, material evidence consistent with the report of the historian Livy, writing in the late first century BCE, that a contract for a “wall of dressed stone” was let in 377 BCE.¹⁶ This republican-era wall should not be forgotten in our assessment of the urban landscape of early imperial Rome. It is true that by the reign of the first emperor Augustus, the built-up area of the city (including commercial and residential structures) had spilled far beyond the circuit of the Servian Wall and the wall no longer served a defensive function.¹⁷ Furthermore, one of the most important areas of the city, the Campus Martius, was never enclosed by this circuit.¹⁸ Nevertheless, long stretches of the Servian Wall survived throughout the imperial period (and even down to the present), and where they were visible—that is, where still standing and not swallowed up by later buildings—above all along the topographically vulnerable eastern flank of the city, they must have stood as a potent symbol of the manpower and engineering expertise of the early republic. At least in symbolic terms, then, the Servian Wall may be seen as early imperial Rome’s equivalent of Chang’an’s exterior walls.¹⁹

INTERIOR WALLS

In his fictive account of Cicero’s visit to Chang’an, Hsing I-t’ien imagines the Roman statesman’s bewilderment as he attempts to make his way around a city without many obvious landmarks and within a “labyrinth of walls within walls.”²⁰ For residents of the city, by contrast, the dense network of streets must have been relatively easy to navigate, as the wards were designed and laid out in a more or less predictable way.²¹ Nevertheless, the visual and spatial impact of these interior walls must have been striking (for visitors and residents alike), creating something like a “human cage,” as some scholars have phrased it.²² With huge walls surrounding markets, wards, and the Arsenal, all in addition to those massive ramparts screening the palace compounds from the rest of the city, the urban space of Chang’an was emphatically partitioned. The resulting grid of “walls within walls” were a defining feature of Chang’an’s cityscape.²³

Of course, it would have been easy for a visitor to early imperial Rome to get lost too. In the densely crowded residential districts in particular, the combination of narrow streets, crooked alleys, and multistory apartment complexes (*insulae*), augmented by the city’s natural topography of narrow valleys and undulating hilltops, would have created for pedestrians something like a “canyon effect,” as in Chang’an, notably devoid of landmarks.²⁴ But the interior walls of Chang’an not only partitioned urban space in

a lattice-like manner, as did Rome's multistory apartment blocks; they also embodied an aesthetic—and, presumably, communicated an ideology—of exclusion (or, perhaps better, of separation).²⁵ According to the conventional interpretation, Rome's urban landscape presented nothing comparable to this omnipresent, exclusionary (or partitive) aesthetic, because the nonresidential, public areas of the city were characterized (so the traditional view goes) by an abundance of open and easily accessible civic space. That is probably true of most public areas in Rome (the Forum, the temples and colonnaded squares throughout the city, the open fields of the Campus Martius, etc.), but recent work on the imperial fora, in the monumental city center, should give us pause before we declare all nonresidential space in the city to have been open and accessible.²⁶

The imperial fora were a sequence of five interlinked complexes, each of them colonnaded, paved, and fitted out with a temple and with multiple statues and sculptural reliefs, each of them built between the late first century BCE and early second century CE, under Julius Caesar (40s BCE) and the emperors Augustus, Vespasian (r. 69–79 CE), Domitian (r. 81–96 CE), and Trajan (r. 98–117 CE). The imperial fora not only accommodated various imperial rituals but also served as a monumental setting for a wide range of commercial, administrative, and cultural activities, many of them transferred over time from the republican Forum (Fig. 2.03).

Scholars have assumed that access to these fora was easy and regular, as access to the republican Forum had been (and remained); but with the exception of the Forum Transitorium, which served as a monumental thoroughfare between the Subura, a particularly crowded residential district, and the Forum, there appear to have been few points of entry into the imperial fora.²⁷ Indeed, even interior communications between the several fora complexes seem to have been quite limited. In light of the crucial administrative documents, important literary collections, and priceless artworks housed within these spaces, it should not be too surprising that access might have been strictly controlled. It is not impossible, in brief, that the traditional picture of the imperial fora—always crowded with a cross section of the urban populace visiting these spaces or simply passing through them—is highly misleading, and that this whole sequence of monumental spaces was instead limited, in practice, to Roman officials and members of the social and political elite.²⁸ That is certainly the impression created by the perimeter walls of the imperial fora, which, like the multiple interior walls of Chang'an, created an imposing physical barrier between different types of space within the city (Fig. 2.04). In this one key area in Rome's urban landscape, then, we do find an exclusionary aesthetic, one very similar to that created by the grid of "walls within walls" inside the Han capital.

MARKETS

Based on literary sources, archaeological remains, and comparison with other cities in Han China, it is possible to reconstruct the outlines of the big, centrally organized markets that served Chang'an.²⁹ From literary sources we know that the Western Market

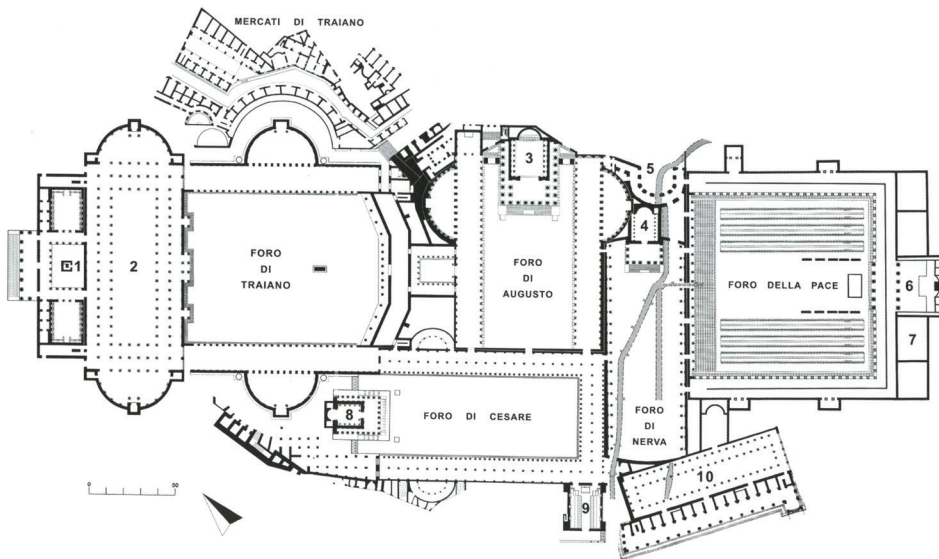


FIG. 2.03 Plan of the imperial fora in Rome. Reproduced with permission from Meneghini and Valenzani 2007, 40, plate 2.

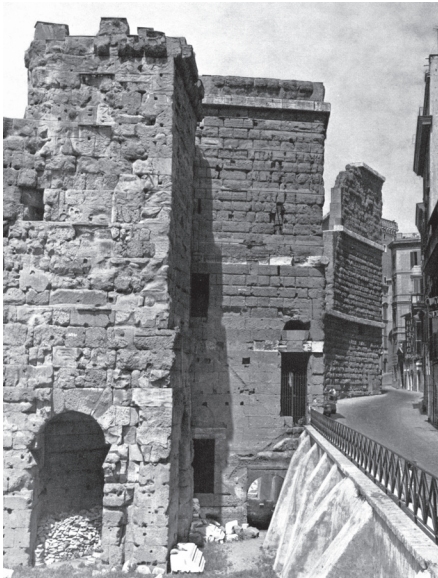


FIG. 2.04 Perimeter wall of the Forum of Augustus, Rome. Reproduced with permission from Nash 1961, 410, fig. 502.

(occupying approximately 250,000 square meters) and the Eastern Market (occupying approximately 500,000 square meters) were immediately adjacent to one another; from the basic plan of the city we know that the only space for these two markets was in the northern part of the city; and from small finds in the northwestern portion of the city we can safely locate the two major markets there.³⁰ Like the other principal sectors of the city, the markets were walled, access to them provided by a pair of gates on each side. Gatetowers, perhaps as high as five stories, facilitated surveillance and the maintenance of order. The existence of large markets situated outside the city suggests

that the Eastern and Western Markets could not by themselves serve the commercial needs of Chang'an's population, but it is at least clear that in these two markets the city's inhabitants could find foodstuffs both basic and exotic, merchandise both utilitarian and luxurious, and small manufactured goods of all types, including the all-important figurines employed in funerary ritual. From what we know about markets in other Han cities, it is probably safe to assume that these markets were sites for relatively unmediated social interactions between urban dwellers, but always under the supervision of imperial officials.

The commercial topography of early imperial Rome was organized rather differently. Most retail activity took place in small shops called *tabernae*.³¹ Some *tabernae* were located in public spaces, such as the Forum, but most were attached to private residential buildings, both single-family aristocratic houses (*domus*) and multifamily apartment blocks (*insulae*), almost always on the ground floor and with wide openings facing the street. Because these small shops were usually attached to residential buildings, rented out to shopkeepers by wealthy landlords, they were spread out all over the city and so were not subject to the same type of official control that pervaded the markets in Chang'an. There were, nevertheless, several features of Rome's commercial landscape that recall that of Chang'an. First, particular occupations tended to cluster in the same neighborhoods, and even along the same streets: just as in Chang'an, where one could find specific products in specific sections of the Western and Eastern Markets, so too in Rome could one find specific products in specific neighborhoods. Second, certain areas of Rome served as commercial hubs, especially the Forum, the Forum Boarium, and, to a lesser extent, the city's "warehouse district," on both sides of the Tiber River to the south of the monumental city center. Finally, there were several walled, purpose-built marketplaces in the city, such as the Horrea Agrippiana, just south of the Forum on the northwest slope of the Palatine Hill, where shopkeepers and merchants did business.³² Despite the absence of big central markets in early imperial Rome, then, its commercial and retail sectors functioned in a manner not so different from the markets of Chang'an.³³

THE ARSENAL

Situated very near the center of the city, flanked by the Changle Palace to the east and the Weiyang Palace to the west, stood the Arsenal (a.k.a. Armory).³⁴ This massive structure, surrounded by large walls and occupying about 250,000 square meters, contained seven warehouses, the largest roughly 1,500 square meters, which stored weapons and armor made of iron and bronze, all neatly stacked and arranged in rows upon rows of wooden racks set on stone bases.³⁵ The collection of so many weapons in one centrally controlled place, administered by imperial officials in close proximity to the emperor himself, must have facilitated the coordinated and rapid deployment of armed troops—some of whom seem to have been stationed in or near Chang'an—while also serving

as a potent symbol of the overwhelming military power at the disposal of the imperial regime.³⁶

Early imperial Rome lacked a similar purpose-built structure for the stockpiling of weapons and armor in the center of the city. In the northeastern corner of the city, however, there was a monumental structure associated with the military establishment: the Praetorian barracks (*castra Praetoria*). This enormous military camp was located on the edge of the city's built-up area (outside the *pomerium*, on which see below)—atop the Viminal Hill, from which much of the city was visible—where the soldiers of the Praetorian Guard resided (approximately 6,000 in number) together with those assigned to the Urban Prefect (another 1,500), who oversaw the administration of the city (see Fig. 2.01).³⁷ The walls of the Praetorian barracks, 4.73 meters in height, enclosed an area of 167,200 square meters. Though its interior architecture is not well known, it is clear that the whole structure was built in the form of a military camp in the field. What the Praetorian barracks represents, above all, is the intrusion of organized military force into the city of Rome, perhaps the most dramatic transformation of Rome's urban landscape in the transition from republic to monarchy in the late first century BCE. Partly in functional terms, then, but especially in symbolic ones, the Praetorian barracks may be seen as early imperial Rome's parallel to Chang'an's Arsenal.

SHANGLIN PARK

In the area to the south and southwest of Chang'an, outside the city walls, lay the vast Shanglin Park, a imperial park developed by the emperor Wu on the site of an earlier park built during the Qin period.³⁸ At the heart of Shanglin Park stood the Jianzhang Palace, an immense complex that came to rival the palaces within the walls, especially Weiyang Palace, as a privileged royal residence and center of imperial ritual. The extensive grounds of Shanglin Park—on the order of 100 square kilometers (17.22 sq. *li*)—were systematically upgraded too, not only furnished with pavilions, artificial lakes, and a range of statues, many of them designed to communicate messages of celestial and cosmic order, but also stocked with animals, birds, plants, and exotica of all sorts drawn from every corner of the empire (and beyond).³⁹ Though the park lay outside the city walls, it was closely connected with the city, both spatially and ideologically, and should certainly be seen as part of the larger agglomeration that was Han Chang'an.

The Campus Martius in Rome may be seen as the “counterpart” to Shanglin Park in Chang'an, as has been noted earlier.⁴⁰ Like Shanglin, the Campus Martius, situated in Rome's extensive floodplain in the northwestern quadrant of the city, lay outside the city wall during the early imperial period; it also lay outside the ritual boundary of the city, the *pomerium*, an imaginary (but physically marked) line that divided the religiously defined city from everything beyond, serving in particular to demarcate the “civilian” space of the city from the “militarized” space of the outside world.⁴¹ The Campus Martius was a mostly open space characterized, like Shanglin Park, by exten-

sive greenery, elaborate waterworks, architectural wonders, and ideologically charged statuary. From the second century BCE, it was the prime setting in Rome for urban leisure and sociability. Furthermore, again recalling the imperial park at Chang'an, it was in this parklike setting that a defining imperial ritual took place. For the Campus Martius was the site for the commencement of the triumph, a military parade through the streets of Rome, in which captured booty, conquered enemies, Roman soldiers, and the emperor himself, effectively claiming credit for the victory on the battlefield, were displayed before the urban populace in a striking procession that culminated on the Capitoline Hill with a sacrifice to the supreme deity of the Roman pantheon, Jupiter Optimus Maximus.⁴² So in a number of important respects—spatial relationship to the city center; spatial experience defined by openness, greenery, waterworks, and statuary; as a site for key monarchic ritual(s)—Shanglin Park in Chang'an and the Campus Martius in Rome were structurally equivalent. But there was, of course, a vital distinction: the Campus Martius was wholly public. Whatever leisure and sociability there was to be had in Shanglin Park, by contrast, was not for everyone.⁴³ This is a key difference, to be sure, but not, as we will see in a moment, a defining one.

• • •

This short overview of the cityscapes of Western Han Chang'an and early imperial Rome shows a number of elements from the former that find structural parallels in the latter. These parallels may be located on a spectrum that ranges from the purely functional to the purely symbolic. Toward the symbolic end of the spectrum we might place Rome's Servian Wall, which communicated the same ideals of defense, fortification, and engineering expertise—however irrelevant these had become in practice in the early imperial period—that were surely expressed by the exterior walls of Chang'an. Similarly parallel are the Praetorian barracks and the Arsenal in Chang'an, both symbolizing the military power controlled by the imperial regime. Toward the functional end of the spectrum, by contrast, we might place the commercial topography of Rome, which paralleled that of Chang'an only in its concentration of specific goods in specific (but widely scattered) places, and perhaps also in its network of streets, multistory apartment blocks, and above all perimeter walls of the imperial fora, all of which created a spatial effect not unlike the grid of "walls within walls" in the Han capital. And somewhere in the middle of the spectrum we might place both the Campus Martius and the imperial palace on the Palatine Hill, both of which mirrored some of the functional and some of the symbolic features of Shanglin Park and the Chang'an imperial palaces, respectively. Again, it must be stressed that none of these structural parallels should be seen as perfect correspondences. But taken together, they reveal a degree of structural comparability sufficient to show that the two imperial capitals were not quite as different from one another as they might appear at first glance.

Political Authority, Monarchy, and the Logics of Urban Form in Chang'an and Rome

Someone could object that this comparison between Western Han Chang'an and early imperial Rome fails the "common sense" test. After all, the plans of the two cities look remarkably different from one another, and no amount of scholarly ingenuity can explain away that stubborn fact. In comparing the two cities, however, we must be precise in identifying both the specific points of comparison and the level at which the analysis is being undertaken. The focus here is not on the actual urban forms of the two cities but rather on their underlying principles, or "logics." The key point is this: the cityscapes of Western Han Chang'an and early imperial Rome—however different they may look on the surface—may both be read as concrete expressions of monarchic authority. It goes without saying that the ways in which monarchy was construed in the two societies, and the attendant discourses around the nature of rulership, were different, but for the purposes of this argument those differences are not significant. What is significant, first, is that the urban forms of these two imperial capitals were structured by the logic of politics, as opposed to that of, for example, economics or culture (narrowly defined); and second, that the politics in both capitals were emphatically monarchic in nature. That both propositions are true of Chang'an is obvious, perhaps even banal; that they are equally true of early imperial Rome is more controversial.

The political system of the Han empire must be classified as a monarchy, but like most premodern monarchies it was not, in practice, absolutist.⁴⁴ Han emperors, like all early monarchs, depended for day-to-day decision making on a close inner circle of high-ranking advisors, and they could only hope to implement those decisions by means of an elaborate bureaucracy; but they nevertheless functioned symbolically as embodiments of state and governmentality and so were at least notionally responsible for all major decisions, administrative appointments, the dispensation of justice, and the promulgation of laws. Emperors' power rested in part on control of the army, in part on collaboration with the noble families, in part on dynastic legitimation, and in part on divine sanction. In addition, an elaborate ideological apparatus surrounded and undergirded Han rulership. In assessing this monarchic ideology, it is possible to trace a conceptual evolution over the course of the Han dynasty that moved from an emphasis on military conquest (inherited from the Qin dynasty) to an emphasis on heavenly support and the preservation of cosmic order. This shift was paralleled by the rising influence of a constellation of ideals and values in which morality, universality, centralization, order, and political authority—a particular nexus of ideals with classical roots (real and imagined) that is *ex post facto* often labeled "Confucian learning"—coalesced and converged, at least in part, in the figure of the emperor.⁴⁵

A key way that this imperial ideology visibly manifested itself was in the cities of the Han empire in general, and in the capital city of Chang'an in particular.⁴⁶ As we have seen, the plan of late Western Han Chang'an was dominated by the city's five palaces. They were, in fact, the defining feature of Chang'an's cityscape, and the resulting con-

figuration of space within the city walls was a potent expression of the centrality and power of the imperial monarchy. Several architectural features of the palaces themselves, especially the ramparts surrounding the complexes and the elevated walkways between them, served an important ideological function in their own right: they helped to keep the emperor out of sight. Indeed, invisibility was a key tenet of Han emperorship and an important tool for magnifying the power of the ruling emperor.⁴⁷

The wider urban landscape of Chang'an reinforced the centrality and power of the emperor in several ways. The verticality of the imperial palaces, of the gatetowers flanking the city gates, and of the towers surrounding the marketplaces all transmitted a message of imperial omnipresence and surveillance, while the even more dramatic verticality of the imperial tombs in the suburbs to the north of the city—closely connected, like Shanglin Park, both spatially and ideologically, with the urban settlement inside the walls—implied an intrinsic connection between the monarchy and Heaven.⁴⁸ Furthermore, a highly developed set of imperial rituals that took place in and around the city invested this urban space and its various structures with a transcendent significance that was channeled through the figure of the emperor.⁴⁹ Not only in its configuration of space and monumental architecture, then, but also in its ritual practices did the city of Chang'an dramatically express the ideology of Han rulership. In this respect, we can say that the logic of its urban form was structured by political authority and monarchic power.

That the city of Rome during the early imperial period was similarly structured by political authority and above all monarchic power, and that the political system of the Roman empire during this period should even be seen as a monarchy, are hardly consensus views. In fact, a more conventional interpretation of Roman political structure and urban form might proceed as follows. The political system of the first two centuries CE was not a monarchy (so the traditional reasoning goes) but rather, as the Romans themselves called it, a "principate" (*principatus*), managed by a *princeps*, "first among equals." Unlike monarchies, which reached back into time immemorial according to most traditions, the principate in Rome emerged in the clear light of history (in the late first century BCE)—and out of a republican, city-state-based government to boot. This republican inheritance fundamentally shaped the authority, legitimacy, and power of the *princeps*, who is best seen as a civilian magistrate formally empowered by the traditional institutions of the republic (citizen body and senate) with a set of precisely defined constitutional powers, and whose legal position continued to be expressed by means of traditional republican titles. Even under Augustus, conventionally identified as the first *princeps*, there was no intention to found a dynasty.⁵⁰ And this strong, even defining, republican streak in the Roman principate was clearly manifested in the city of Rome's urban landscape, characterized as it was by a proliferation of large-scale venues for public entertainment and urban leisure, all for the benefit not of the *princeps* but of Rome's citizen body (*populus Romanus*), a particular configuration of urban space in which the palace complex on the Palatine Hill nearly fades into insignificance.⁵¹

But neither part of a conventional account like this is wholly tenable. In terms of the political system of the early empire, the Roman emperor, despite all the republican symbolism to the contrary, functioned as a true monarch—or, at the very least, as no less a monarch than a Han emperor. The Roman emperor was literally “above the law,” and his decisions automatically made law. His formal powers were explicitly defined as absolute and (just in case anyone missed the point) as superior to those of any other official. He normally controlled the transmission of imperial power, most often within a ruling dynasty. And when provincial communities swore their annual oaths of allegiance, it was not to any legal or constitutional abstraction (“Rome,” “the republic,” “the principate”) but rather to the reigning emperor himself. It goes without saying that there were any number of constraints on the effective power of Roman emperors, but they nevertheless stood, unambiguously, at the apex of the empire’s political and social hierarchy. When later observers identified the *principatus* established by Augustus as a monarchy, they were quite right to do so.⁵²

More pertinent to the subject of this chapter is the manner in which this monarchical power was manifested in Rome’s cityscape. It may be acknowledged that Rome’s urban fabric was largely defined by all those venues for public entertainment. Even a short list of the most prominent of these purpose-built structures is impressive.⁵³ There were the massive imperial bath complexes spread all over the city, including, just from the early empire, the Baths of Agrippa, the Baths of Nero, the Baths of Titus, and the Baths of Trajan (Fig. 2.05). At these complexes, visitors not only took exercise, bathed themselves, and cultivated their bodies but also engaged with works of art and literature, mostly Greek in origin.⁵⁴ There were the large colonnaded squares throughout the Campus Martius, where visitors could find shade and greenery and (again) could contemplate mostly Greek artworks (Fig. 2.06). There were the major stone theaters for dramatic performances, including the Theater of Pompey (restored by Augustus), the Theater of Balbus (built by an Augustan partisan), the Theater of Marcellus (dedicated by Augustus to his nephew), and the Odeum of Domitian. There were not one but two circuses for chariot racing, the Stadium of Domitian in the Campus Martius and the gigantic Circus Maximus between the Palatine and Aventine Hills, the latter with a capacity of some 250,000 spectators. And there was, finally, the Amphitheatrum Flavium (Colosseum), in the monumental city center, an architectural marvel with a seating capacity of about 50,000, dedicated to the public display of organized violence: wild-beast hunts, executions of convicted criminals, and gladiatorial combat.⁵⁵ It was through these monumental structures above all that Rome proclaimed itself the center of a far-flung empire (Fig. 2.07).⁵⁶

The number, spatial spread, and physical scale of these purpose-built structures for public entertainment were the defining feature of Rome’s cityscape and should be seen as the urban counterpart to the five palaces in Chang’an.⁵⁷ These structures were not, however, an expression of popular sovereignty or republican ideology, as they are sometimes thought to be. Like the palace complexes in the Han capital, they were expres-

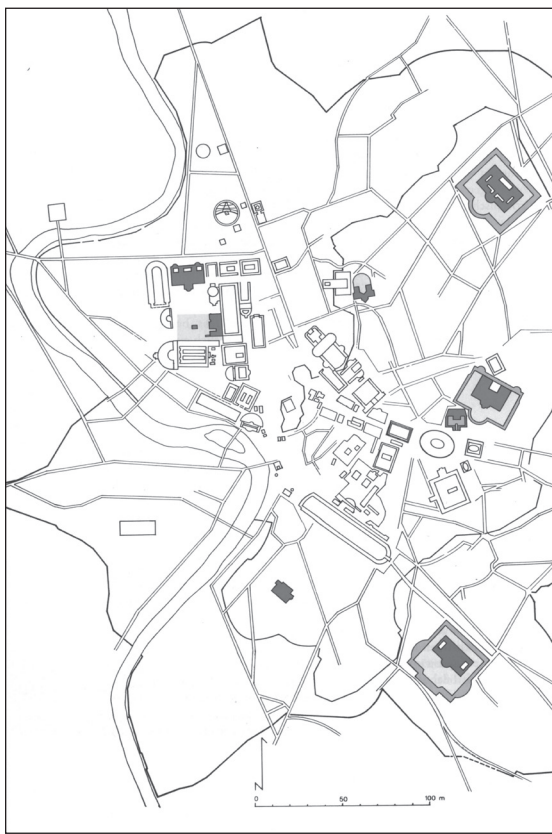


FIG. 2.05 Imperial Rome: Bath complexes. Reproduced with permission from Zanker 1997, 20, plan 2.

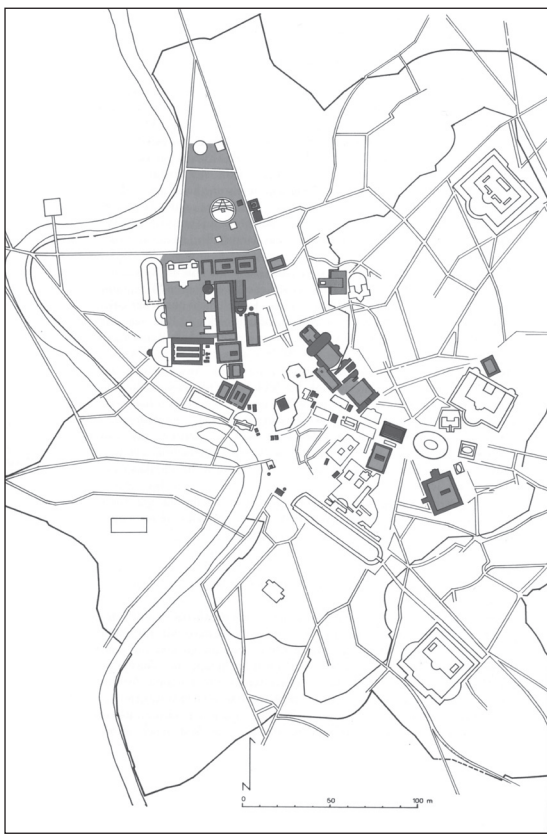


FIG. 2.06 Imperial Rome: Colonnaded squares and sanctuaries. Reproduced with permission from Zanker 1997, 8, plan 1.

sions of political power in general and monarchic power in particular. The connection between the emperor, these urban structures, and monarchic ideology is reflected in (at least) two discourses that grew up around the practices associated with public entertainment in early imperial Rome.

The first was the discourse of imperial generosity. It must be emphasized that these monumental structures were either built or restored, and then maintained, by the emperors themselves and that the entertainments that took place in them, with a few exceptions, were paid for by the emperor, in theory from his own sources of wealth. In this way the emperor could serve as the supreme patron of the urban populace of Rome, providing the city's inhabitants with a privileged form of leisure through his own paradigmatic *liberalitas*, or generosity. This was not a republican ideal. The pedigree of this particular type of *liberalitas* was instead monarchic, as there had existed in the ancient Mediterranean world a long-standing tradition in which "good" rulers, especially kings, were expected to expend their personal resources for the benefit of their subjects. So the emperor's provision of entertainment for his subjects, which took place

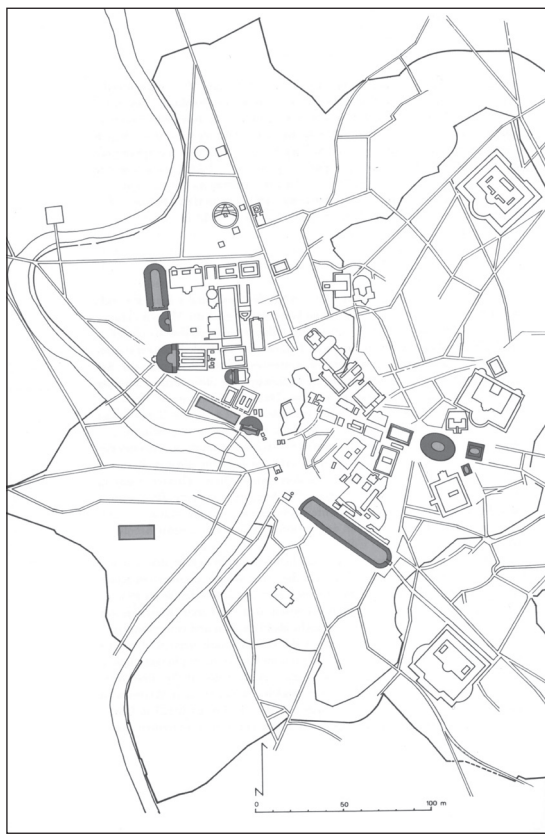


FIG. 2.07 Imperial Rome: Public entertainment complexes. Reproduced with permission from Zanker 1997, 26, plan 3.

in these lavish structures that he had built or restored and then maintained, served as an especially visible expression of his own *liberalitas*, which not only secured his position as the supreme patron of the urban populace but also identified him, in the collective consciousness of his subjects, as a monarch.⁵⁸

The second relevant discourse was that of public honor. A “good” Roman emperor, as we have seen, was expected to display his personal generosity for the benefit of his subjects. One of the ways in which his subjects could symbolically repay these benefactions was through a system of public honors for the emperor, especially honorific statues and epigraphic dedications of all sorts. The practice of exchanging public honors for imperial benefactions was useful both for the emperor, whose generosity could be publicly recognized in this way, and for the dedicators, who could thereby ensure that their expectations of future benefactions were at all times manifest. Though this notionally dialogic system did secure a degree of agency for the urban populace, its ideological origins were actually (and unmistakably) monarchic, derived

in particular from the Hellenistic kingdoms that formed in the wake of Alexander the Great’s conquests, in which cities regularly honored the kings who ruled them with a wide range of honorific dedications. This practice of offering public honors to rulers was alien to the traditions of the republic, in which senators had competed with one another through *self*-promotion and *self*-honor. That the emperor regularly received public honors in exchange for his benefactions, then, so far from dressing up his generosity with a republican veneer, only served to underline his monarchic standing.⁵⁹

So there was a clear connection between the emperor and these venues of public entertainment, on the one hand, and a quite robust monarchic ideology, on the other. This ideological nexus extended into the realm of hard political power too. The point is made brilliantly by two contemporary observers. The first is the satiric poet Juvenal, writing in the early second century CE: “The Roman people, which once bestowed political power [*imperium*], the symbols of authority [*fascēs*], legions, everything, now foregoes such activities and has but two passionate desires: bread and circuses [*panem et circenses*].”⁶⁰ The second, not quite as well known, is the orator and imperial tutor

Fronto, writing in the mid-second century CE: “It was the height of political wisdom for the emperor not to neglect even actors and the other performers of the stage, the circus, and the arena, since he knew that the Roman people are controlled by two things above all, the grain supply and the shows (*annona et spectaculis*), and that the success of government depends on amusements as much as on serious things.”⁶¹

Both writers make explicit the relationship between the purpose-built structures for public entertainment (drawing particular attention to the circus and the “arena,” shorthand for the amphitheater) and the political authority exercised by the emperor. It is in large part through these buildings and the activities that took place in them (*spectacula*), as the writers both suggest, that the emperor maintained social control. And here we may recall the words of the imperial architect and advisor Xiao He, who patiently explained to the emperor Gaozu that his extravagant palace was actually a political necessity, insofar as it functioned to manifest his imperial authority and to secure a smooth dynastic succession (see note 3 in this chapter). Xiao He, Juvenal, and Fronto are all, in their different ways, expressing the same basic principle. As all three recognize, these monumental structures not only signify monarchic power; they also help to promote and even constitute it. And so even though the palaces of Chang’an and the venues for public entertainment in early imperial Rome look very different on the surface, their underlying logics, and the logics of urban form in both cities more generally, were essentially the same.

Conclusion

The assertion that Western Han Chang’an and early imperial Rome, when analyzed at the level of underlying structures, should resemble one another derives from recognizing the many structural parallels in the political systems of the Han and Roman empires, especially in terms of chronological development, scale, demography, economic performance, institutions, and levels of technology and literacy.⁶² In light of these parallels, we might expect the respective centers of political power in both imperial systems not only to appear similar but also to function in similar ways. The cityscapes of the two capitals do in fact share a number of structural features, whether seen in functional or symbolic terms, and the differences between them have been exaggerated. Although an obvious discrepancy exists between a city dominated by palaces and one dominated by public entertainment complexes, the underlying logics of both urban forms, however different they appeared on the surface, were more or less the same, since in both cities these dominant monumental structures were vivid expressions of monarchic power.

A structural comparison of this sort would produce quite different results if we compared Western Han Chang’an, not with early imperial Rome, but rather with the Rome of the middle and late republic (ca. 264–31 BCE).⁶³ In the first place, the urban fabrics of the cities are then less similar than those of Chang’an and imperial Rome, mainly because of the absence in republican Rome of anything like a palace complex—

no monarchy, no royal or imperial palace. More important, the underlying logics of urban form were divergent. Even though the urban form of republican Rome, like that of the early imperial city, was structured by politics and political power, its underlying logic was shaped by a political system in which decision making was distributed among several institutions and practical power divided between a fluctuating number of highly competitive aristocratic families. The haphazard spread of “victory” monuments erected by successful generals in the middle republic (ca. 264–133 BCE), mainly temples, and the competing building programs sponsored by the great “warlords” of the first century BCE, especially Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar, reflect this multipolar, often fragmented power structure. In brief, just as political power in republican Rome was dispersed and divided, so too was the city’s urban landscape. That political centralization and the emergence of a more coherent and univalent urban form went hand in hand is clear from the systematic overhaul of the city under Augustus and his successors.⁶⁴

It is really only in this later phase of Rome’s urban development, then, that the logic of its urban form overlapped so neatly with that of Western Han Chang’an. And although particularist interpretations of the two cities can of course point up thousands of apparent differences between them, the broader, comparativist approach undertaken here can also shed light on deeper and less obvious correspondences that are no less real.

Notes

- 1 For a recent attempt to compare ancient Rome and Chang’an, organized around the fiction of a high-profile visitor from each city to the other, see Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, which emphasizes major differences between the two capitals.
- 2 General accounts in Wang Zhongshu 1982, 4–7; Steinhardt 1990, 55–57, 63–65, 67–68; Wu Hung 1995, 150–56; Xiong 2000, 10–11; Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 2010, 174–75; Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 206.
- 3 In a well-known exchange reported by Sima Qian (*Shiji* 8.385–86), Gaozu asks his architect, Xiao He, “What do you mean by constructing palaces like this on such an extravagant scale?”; to which the architect responds, “If [a ruler] does not dwell in magnificence and beauty, he will have no way to manifest his authority, nor will he leave any foundation for his heirs to build on” (trans. Watson 1993a, 1:92). On the implications of this passage, see below.
- 4 Cf. Steinhardt 1990, 60, fig. 5.1, for a Han-era rubbing depicting such gatetowers (*que*).
- 5 For Chang’an as “palace town,” see Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 2010, 174.
- 6 For the archaeological remains of the various imperial complexes on the Palatine Hill, see *LTUR* 2:40–45 (L. Sasso D’Elia), 2:187–97 (C. Krause), 2:197–99 (H. Hurst).
- 7 As Suetonius puts it in his *Life of Gaius* 22.2.
- 8 Royo 1999 provides a general overview of the topography and functions of the imperial palace(s) on the Palatine Hill. For more detailed studies of the architecture, see the papers collected in Hoffmann and Wulff 2004; Sojc 2006. For the intersection between imperial ideology and banqueting, see Zanker 2002. On the Roman imperial court, see Winterling 1999; Paterson 2007. On the formation of the court and the emergence of court society under Augustus, see Sumi 2011.

- 9 Archaeological remains in different parts of the city: *LTUR* 2:49–50, general overview (A. Cassatella); 2:50–51, vestibule (A. Cassatella and S. Panella); 2:51–55, Colosseum valley (S. Panella); 2:55–56, porticus (E. Papi); 2:56–63, Esquiline Hill (L. Fabbrini); 2:63–64, Palatine Hill (A. Cassatella). For a general study of the architecture, see also MacDonald 1965–86, 1:20–46. For the ideology of the Golden House, see Champlin 1998.
- 10 Suetonius, *Nero* 31, trans. Graves 2007 (modified).
- 11 The Jianzhang Palace in Chang'an, built outside the city walls by the emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BCE), in Shanglin Park (see below), was similar to the Domus Aurea in its blending of urban and rural features.
- 12 Modern scholarship on Han Chang'an's city walls begins with Hotaling 1978 (detailing the results of two major archaeological surveys undertaken in 1957 and 1962). For summary accounts, see also Wang Zhongshu 1982, 1–2; Steinhardt 1990, 57; Wu Hung 1995, 156–61; Xiong 2000, 10–11; Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 203.
- 13 For city gates, see Wang Zhongshu 1982, 2–3; Steinhardt 1990, 66. For the city plan not constructed according to constellations, see Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010, 174, with note 12 supplying a recent bibliography. For the relation between the “Kaogong ji” (“Record of Artisans”) and the layout of Chang'an, see Wang Zhongshu 1982, 6; Lewis 2007, 93. We do not know how widely this text circulated in the Western Han period.
- 14 Cf. Steinhardt 1990, 68.
- 15 Defense in men not walls: Cic., *Rep.* 2.11; Strabo 5.3.7. Walls “hard to find” (because surrounded by later structures): Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 4.13.5. On Augustan Rome as a “city without walls,” see Haselberger 2007, 230–37.
- 16 Livy 6.32.1: “*murus saxo quadrato*.” In general on the Servian Wall, see *LTUR* 3:319–24 (M. Andreussi). For its condition in the early imperial period, see Haselberger 2002, 169–171 (A. Thein). For the course of the wall in different parts of the early imperial city, see Haselberger 2002, 171–79 (multiple authors).
- 17 On the “built-up” area of the Augustan city, see Haselberger 2002, 97–99 (L. Haselberger). For the ideology of early imperial Rome as an “open city,” see also Frézouls 1987.
- 18 The Transtiberim (the whole region west of the Tiber River), too, lay outside the circuit of the Servian Wall. On the Campus Martius, see below.
- 19 That the exterior walls of Chang'an might have served a primarily symbolic, rather than defensive, purpose is suggested by Wu Hung 1995, 158–61. The later Aurelian Wall in Rome, built in the late third century CE as a defensive fortification of the city, measuring 18,837 meters in perimeter, 6.5 meters in height (later increased in sections to 13 meters), and 4 meters in thickness, and studded with a series of imposing gates and towers, was much closer than the Servian Wall, in both form and function, to Chang'an's exterior walls. On the Aurelian Wall, see *LTUR* 3:290–99 (G. Pisani Sartorio).
- 20 Hsing I-tien, in Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 204. But as Griet Vankeerberghen has pointed out to me (personal communication, August 2010), the Weiyang Palace, built atop the Longshou Mountain and probably visible from anywhere in the city, might well have served as an important urban landmark.
- 21 See Zhang Jihai's chapter in this volume.
- 22 Nylan disputes this characterization in her afterword in this volume. But see Zhang Jihai 2006, 147.
- 23 In general, on the partitioning of urban space in early Chinese cities, see Xu Yinong 2000, 74–77, 239. Not all early Chinese cities were subdivided quite so neatly; Luoyang, for example, the capital city of Eastern Han (25–220 CE), was much closer to Rome in the haphazard nature of its urban layout.
- 24 On streets, neighborhoods, and apartment blocks in Rome, see Dyson 2010, 214–240, with

- references to earlier studies. On the archaeology of the *insulae*, see Calza 1916; Packer 1971 (focused on Ostia, but with much relevant material for Rome, esp. 65ff.). For an attempt to map the spatial distribution of *insulae* in the early imperial city, see also Noreña 2006.
- 25 Michael Nylan has suggested to me that these interior walls also provided basic security to Chang'an's residents and so were not necessarily perceived as restrictive, repressive, or exclusionary.
- 26 For a summary of the latest excavations in and around the imperial fora, see Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2007.
- 27 For what follows, see La Rocca 2006, esp. 124–39, for the problem of access to the various fora; cf. Ewald and Noreña 2010, 14–17. On the crucial difference between the spatial experience of the republican Forum, on the one hand, and the imperial fora, on the other, see also Russell 2011, chap. 3, with emphasis on the changing nature of “public” space in the imperial period.
- 28 For a more conventional account of the activities associated with these civic spaces, to which all urban inhabitants allegedly had regular access, see, for example, Zanker 2010, 48–61, esp. 50–52, 57, 60–61, on the imperial fora.
- 29 See discussion in Loewe 1968, 131–41; Wang Zhongshu 1982, 6; Steinhardt 1990, 66–67; Lewis 2007, 81, 83, 92–93; Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010, 175; Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 204–6. On markets in Han cities in general, see Loewe 1968, 128, 140, 154; Sadao 1986, 574–80; Zhang Jihai 2006, 220–62; Lewis 2007, 81–88.
- 30 This reconstruction follows that of Wang Zhongshu 1982, 6, whose figures are still consistent with the evidence from the most recent excavations; cf. Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010, 175. Note that Zhang Jihai's chapter in the present volume raises the question of whether “Nine Shi” refers to “nine markets” or “nine districts,” whereas Wang Zhongshu simply presumes the existence of Nine Markets.
- 31 In general, on the commercial topography of ancient Rome, see Morel 1987. For the world of the *tabernae* in particular, see also Purcell 1994, esp. 659–73.
- 32 On the Horrea Agrippiana, see *LTUR* 3:37–8 (F. Astolfi); for its condition in the early imperial period, see also Haselberger 2002, 140 (C. Noreña).
- 33 There were no state monopolies on commercial goods in early imperial Rome, as there were in Han Chang'an (on salt and iron). Customs dues were charged on goods entering the city, but the nature and scope of these duties are difficult to assess; see Palmer 1980, with Purcell 2005, 228, suggesting that these dues might have been imposed on goods *leaving* the city.
- 34 See briefly Wang Zhongshu 1982, 5; Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2010, 175.
- 35 See the striking illustrations in Wang Zhongshu 1982 of the plan of the Armory (fig. 12), the remains (figs. 13–14), and some of the weapons found there (figs. 15–18).
- 36 In general, on armed force in the Han regime, see Bielenstein 1980, 114–24.
- 37 For the archaeological remains, see *LTUR* 1:251–54 (E. Lissi Caronna). See Coulston 2000 for the intrusion of armed forces into the city of Rome as a major feature of the early imperial period; cf. Ewald and Noreña 2010, 5.
- 38 See useful overviews in Wang Zhongshu 1982, 8–9; Wu Hung 1995, 170–76; Xiong 2000, 11; Lewis 2007, 94–95. Cf. Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 199.
- 39 For details about some of the exotica imported into the park, see Wu Hung 1995, 172–73. On the statues found in recent excavations, see Lewis 2007, 94.
- 40 Brennan, in Brennan and Hsing I-tien 2010, 199.
- 41 For the Servian Wall, see above discussion in this chapter. For the *pomerium*: archaeological remains of boundary stones, *LTUR* 4:96–105 (M. Andreussi); religious and ritual aspects, Beard, North, and Price 1998, 1:177–81.
- 42 For a general (but revisionist) account of the triumph, stressing how much we do not know

about the ceremony, see Beard 2007, with ample references to earlier (and more traditional) studies.

- 43 See Brennan, in Brennan and Hsing 2010, 199. Note also that Shanglin Park was much larger than the Campus Martius.
- 44 The following brief account is intended as a simple (and, I trust, mostly uncontroversial) overview of the institution of monarchy in early imperial China, designed to facilitate comparison with the political system of the Roman empire. Important studies of emperorship and government in early imperial China include Bodde 1938 (Qin period); Bielenstein 1980 (bureaucracy); CHOC, “The Structure and Practice of Government” and “The Concept of Sovereignty”; Loewe 1994a, 85–111 (on conceptions of sovereignty); Giele 2006 (on communications and decision making); Lewis 2006, 169–86; 2007, esp. 62–64 (on emperors and law; cf. 231–32), 77–79 (on emperors and cities), 176–80 (on emperors and ritual); Zhu Weizheng 2008; Turner 2009, esp. 53, 61–64 (on emperors and law).
- 45 For the contexts in which such Confucian ideals were disseminated (esp. in written texts), see Nylan 2000; cf. Nylan 2008b for the (associated) rhetoric of empire in early China.
- 46 In general on the expression of monarchic ideology in early imperial cities, with emphasis on verticality and invisibility, see Lewis 2006, 150–69.
- 47 But this aspect of Han rulership and ideology should not be exaggerated; the emperor did appear in court, after all, and would have been seen during imperial progresses (as the editors of this volume pointed out to me).
- 48 On the imperial tombs, see, most recently, Loewe 2010a, with references to earlier studies.
- 49 Tang Xiaofeng’s chapter in this volume suggests that, over time, Chang’an evolved from a primarily “monarchic” space, centered on the imperial residences, to a primarily “ritual” space, in which the capital city came to be structured as a ritual microcosm of the universe. But even if ritual centers really did displace the palace complexes as the most ideologically resonant feature of the city, the palaces themselves remained spatially and visually prominent, and in any case the rituals were always closely connected with the monarchy itself.
- 50 For republican influence on the system of the principate, and the notion of the emperor as civilian magistrate, see, for example, Rowe 2007; cf. Veyne 2002. Regarding lack of dynastic succession under Augustus, see Gruen 2005.
- 51 This is the picture implied (but not worded quite as strongly as in the above formulation) by Zanker 2010.
- 52 Emperor “above the law”: *Digest* 1.3.31 (Ulpian), “*princeps legibus solutus est*.” Emperor as source of law: *Digest* 1.4.1.pr.-1 (Ulpian), “*quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem*”; cf. Gaius, *Institutes* 1.2.5, “*constitutio principis . . . legis vicem optineat, cum ipse imperator per legem imperium accipiat*.” Emperor’s power as absolute: *ILS* 244, lines 18–20, “*lex de imperio Vespasiani*.” Explicitly superior to that of any other official: *CIL* 2².5.900, lines 34–36; Dio 53.32.5. Augustan regime as monarchy: Appian, *Hist. pr.* 14; Dio 52.1.1. Further references and discussion are in Noreña 2010, 536–37.
- 53 Zanker 2010 offers the best introduction to these structures; for details on the archaeological remains, and for more specialized bibliography, see *LTUR*, q.v. In general, on public entertainment in the city of Rome, see Coleman 2000.
- 54 For bathing and exercise, see discussion in Fagan 1999.
- 55 On the social and cultural aspects of gladiatorial combat, see the stimulating discussion in K. Hopkins 1983, 1–30. For the public execution of criminals in Han cities, see Zhang Jihai 2006, 258.
- 56 Cf. Purcell 2000, esp. 405–23, for Rome as “city of wonders” and symbolic center of the world.
- 57 There were public entertainments in the city of Chang’an, too, though not (as far as we know) on the same scale as those in Rome. See, for example, McCurley 2005 on the Juedixi Games in

- Western Han; cf. Bodde 1975, 382–84, for imperial hunts staged in Shanglin Park.
- 58 There is extensive discussion of imperial *liberalitas*, with ample references, in Noreña 2011, 82–92.
- 59 On the rise of this Greek honorific system in Rome, which went hand in hand with the transition from republic to monarchy, see Wallace-Hadrill 1990.
- 60 Juvenal, *Satires* 10.78–81.
- 61 Fronto, *Principles of History* 17.
- 62 For a concise expression of this basic comparability, with which I am mostly in agreement, see Scheidel 2009a.
- 63 For convenient introductions to the topography and urban history of republican Rome, all with references for what follows, see Purcell 1994; Favro 1996, 24–78; Torelli 2006; Dyson 2010, 17–116.
- 64 See, for example, Zanker 1989; Favro 1996; and Haselberger 2007 for Augustan Rome. In general, on the impact of monarchy on the city of Rome, see Ewald and Noreña 2010.

3

Supplying the Capital with Water and Food

Michael Nylan 戴梅可

URBAN HISTORIANS STUDYING THE GREAT CENTERS OF CIVILIZATION IN antiquity are quick to ask about urban infrastructure, most especially how the city was furnished reliably with adequate food and water. This topic is relatively unexplored with respect to the Western Han capital of Chang'an, despite its crucial importance to the throne,¹ and many controversies remain, whose solution must await further excavations and scholarly analysis.

Water Supply for the Western Han Capital

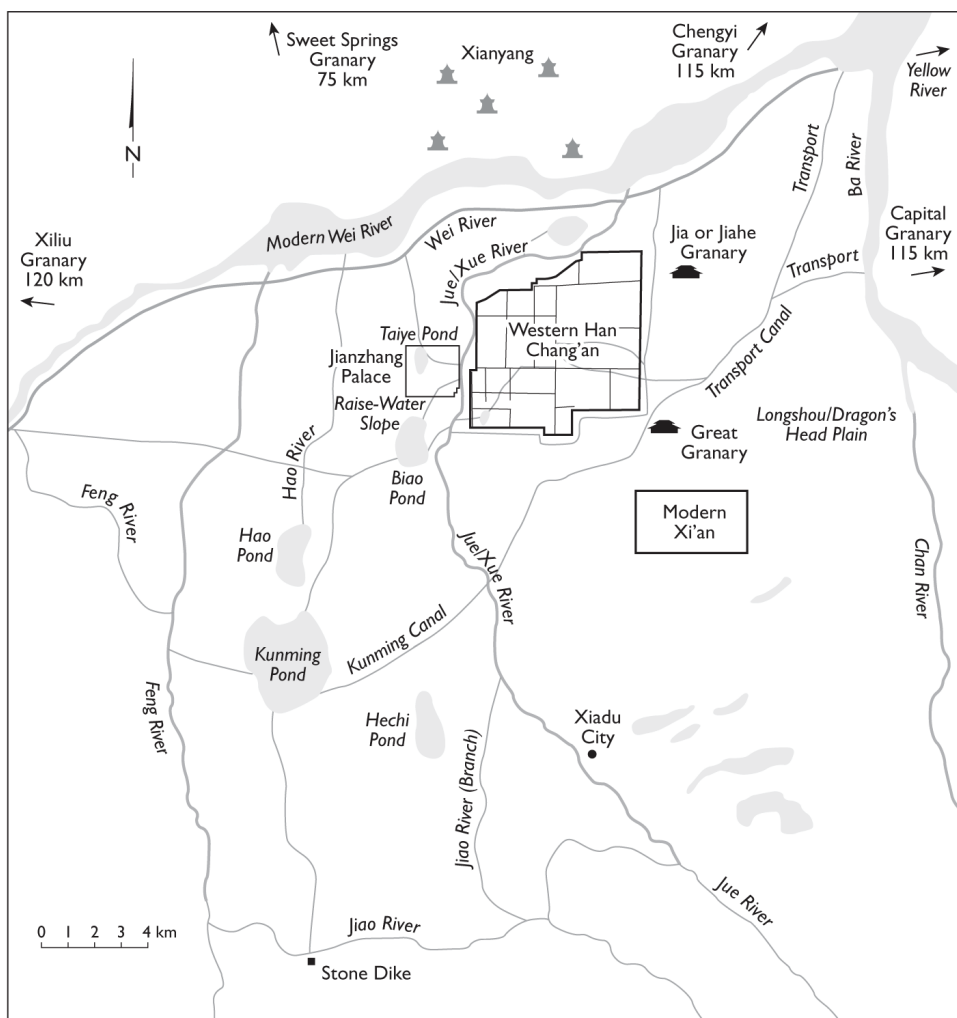
The site of the old Western Han capital at Chang'an sits in the middle of the Wei River Plain (also called the Guanzhong basin), at a height below the high plateaus of present-day Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces, but still roughly 400 meters in elevation. Stretching west as far as Baoji and east as far as the Tong Pass, with the west narrow and the east generally wider, the Wei River Plain east of the old Qin capital at Xianyang widens dramatically, becoming up to 60 kilometers wide.² Accordingly, Western Han Chang'an, located slightly south of the Wei River, occupied one of the widest expanses between riverbanks and mountains, at a spot where the territory is particularly full of rivers and tributaries, with no fewer than eight river systems emptying into the broad and fertile plain: the Wei and Jing (north of Chang'an); the Ba and Chan (east of Chang'an); the Jue (a.k.a. Xue/Jue),³ Feng, Hao, and Lao (south of Chang'an) (Map 3.01).⁴

The high Qinling mountain range defining the southern border of the Wei River

Plain was the ultimate source of most of these rivers, and so they tended to flow northward toward the capital in the Dragon's Head Plain, a section of the larger Wei River Plain. Two interlocking factors increased the rate of some of these river flows into the city: the slightly higher elevation of the Dragon's Head Plain in the southeast over the northwest; and the slightly upward thrust of Lishan, southeast of Chang'an.⁵ Map 3.01 suggests the unusually dense web of water resources in the area, including the man-made Jiao (Connecting) River/Canal and the lesser Qian River.⁶ Because the Wei River ultimately joined up with the meandering Yellow River's southerly flow, the Wei River Plain also permitted water transport via deep rivers to the "area east of the passes" in the North China Plain, even though the Guanzhong basin was surrounded by high mountains.⁷ (Judging from the extant sources, this favorable situation—and not geomantic correlations—was the primary reason for choosing this as the capital's site.)⁸ Four additional major water resources existed near the Western Han capital: hot springs for bathing, a natural source; man-made ponds (which tended to empty into palace complexes); ponds devoted to raising fish (particularly the Hao Pond and Biao Pond, mentioned below); and wells, both man-made and natural.⁹ All this confirms what the early histories continually reiterate: that the site of Western Han Chang'an was chosen precisely for its abundant water resources.¹⁰

Turning to the water intake and outflow systems for the capital (Map 3.02), it is important to keep in mind one oft-forgotten fact: not only the Wei River, but also nearly all the riverbeds in the Wei River Plain, have crept northward over the centuries, aside from the Ba and Chan Rivers flowing east of Western Han Chang'an.¹¹ In Western Han times, then, the city's perimeter walls in the northwestern corner of the capital were 20–30 *li* (8–13 km) closer to the Wei River than their ruins are now; no more than 1 or 2 kilometers separated the river from the walls. While it is extremely difficult to trace all aspects of the water-intake and outflow systems to the Western Han capital, given the number and type of changes that have occurred over the centuries to the natural and built environment, we can assert three statements with relative confidence: First, in early Western Han, water from the Jue River sufficed to supply the needs of the Western Han capital. However, new water resources had to be found as the population "within the passes" grew—due to a combination of forced population transfers, voluntary migration to the capital, and natural increase during times of peace. All sources agree that the Kunming Pond built during Wudi's reign, first in 120 BCE but expanded in 114 BCE, formed the city's principal water reservoir used during mid- to late Western Han.¹² Located between the Slender Willow and Gaoyang Plains fed by the Hao and Jue Rivers, Kunming Pond was immense: it measured 4.25 kilometers (E–W) by 5.69 kilometers (N–S), with a water storage capacity of 3,549 cubic meters—roughly equal to that of a modern reservoir built for a medium-sized city today.¹³ Stretching across some 300 *qing* of land (1,380 hectares), its waters reportedly were deep enough to support mock naval battles.¹⁴

Second, the Stone Dike, built under Han Wudi, was the primary regulator of water flow and water diversion.¹⁵ The dike was designed to push the water upward from Kun-



MAP 3.02 Major granaries, riverways, and passes around Western Han Chang'an. Map generated by Bill Nelson based on multiple works, including Li Lingfu 2008, Huang Shengzhang 1982b, 15. For the passes, see Map 3.05. The Pier Granary, located in Fengxiang county, about 170 kilometers to the west of Chang'an, is off the map.

ming Pond to ensure a smooth and continuous flow, via gravity, into the capital. At the same time, the dike acted as a safety valve, redirecting part of that same flow to other rivers (chiefly to the Feng) when floods threatened the capital region (Map 3.03).¹⁶

Meanwhile, the man-made Raise-Water Slope¹⁷ forced the single watercourse issuing from Kunming Pond to divide into two, thereby spreading the waters over a much broader territory. The first Kunming line flowed northeast to a location south of Phoenix Towergate, within the Jianzhang Palace complex, where it eventually emptied into the Taiye Pond.¹⁸ The second Kunming line, located east of the first, flowed north of

ground), before flowing finally into the Changle Palace complex. As a rule, the closer the water flow to the Wei River, the more the Chang'an officials had to employ flying canals (aqueducts) to "push the water up," forcing it to enter the city.²¹ To increase the water pressure, water from several ponds (chiefly the Biao and Cang, the latter inside the Weiyang Palace), and possibly even from the Jue River,²² was deliberately added to the water coming from Kunming Pond at key junctures.²³

Two secondary ponds (both presumably artificial), the Hao and the Biao Ponds,²⁴ were situated at set intervals nearer to the capital city walls (see Map 3.02). The Hao Pond, reservoir for the Hao River, prevented flooding along both the Hao and Wei Rivers; meanwhile the flow from the Biao Pond helped increase the volume of water nearer the city, given the distance the water had to travel from Kunming Pond.²⁵ Two omens—the first occurring during the reign of Chengdi's father and the second in 30 BCE, early in Chengdi's reign—show that the pressure of the water flow from Kunming Pond, situated at an elevation higher than most of the capital city, could sometimes prove too great to contain; during Chengdi's reign, for example, the water in a Northern Palace well surged up and over the sides.²⁶ Thus, dispersing the waters among three major ponds had a distinct advantage, for if less water was likely to be suddenly dumped into the Kunming Pond or its outflows, there was correspondingly less likelihood of sudden flooding in and near the capital. In turn, this sort of even water dispersal prevented undue pressure being exerted upon the pipes and underground water systems of the capital. In addition, fewer torrents of water meant more water flowing gently into the ground, which was better for farming. Eventually, however, multiple man-made changes to the ponds in the area had their unintended consequences: since less water was traveling into Kunming Pond, the size of this reservoir shrank appreciably.²⁷

When we consider the problems faced by the Western Han emperors seeking to furnish the capital with sufficient water and grain supplies, we cannot but be struck by the Han imperial courts' dedication to arranging new canals to supply the city, a task to which they brought energy, innovation, and a single-minded focus.²⁸ Well before unification in 221 BCE, the Qin had already built a major canal called the Zheng Guo,²⁹ whose principal function, to transport troops and materials by linking the otherwise impassable gorge of the Jing River valley with the Wei River to the southeast, did not deter it from irrigating vast expanses of cropland. Reportedly, the Zheng Guo Canal, by irrigating more than 40,000 *qing* of farmland, raised annual production by more than 25 million bushels of grain.³⁰ According to one standard history compiled before 92 CE, the Western Han rulers initiated twenty-four major water conservancy projects across the empire, including three designed mainly for food transport to the capital (see below), six to repair breaches in the dikes at the Yellow River, and fifteen to extend irrigation.³¹ Of the empire's water conservancy projects, a clear majority were designed to address the needs of the capital city itself. As Li Lingfu's analysis has shown, the "high tide" of water conservancy projects was during Han Wudi's reign, when his court attended, first, to infrastructure projects designed to relieve grain shortages (as with the

Transport Canal, discussed below) and, afterward, to major irrigation projects.³² Water conservancy projects north of the Wei River included the following:

LONGSHOU CANAL (built 122–117 BCE, under Han Wudi), whose precise location is hotly debated, but which purportedly irrigated some 10,000 *qing* (approximately 11.39 acres, or 4.6 hectares) of land in eastern Guanzhong;³³ archaeologists have found several parts of this canal.³⁴

CHENGGUO (PERFECT-THE-STATE) CANAL (built under Wudi in 112 BCE), stretching from the north bank of the Wei River, after which it traveled northeasterly to empty into Shanglin Park's Menglong Canal.

MENGLONG CANAL (built under Wudi in 112 BCE), situated on the lower reaches of the Chengguo Canal, its name referring either to a single section or to a tributary of that canal; its express function was to supply water to the Shanglin Park.

WEI CANAL (built under Wudi in 112 BCE), probably began in the Qishan mountains northwest of the capital and north of the Wei River, from which it flowed south (note the exception), emptying into the Yong River in the western part of Fufeng county; its main canal (not the branches) stretched 35–40 kilometers, irrigating three counties' worth of land in present-day Qishan, Fufeng, and Wugong, or 150,000–200,000 *mu*.³⁵

WHITE CANAL (built in 95 BCE, under Han Wudi), whose location and source are at issue, but which indisputably drew from the Jing River somewhere "south of the Zheng Guo Canal";³⁶ supposedly, this White Canal irrigated "more than 4,500 *qing* of land," which caused it to be celebrated by Han farmers in song.³⁷

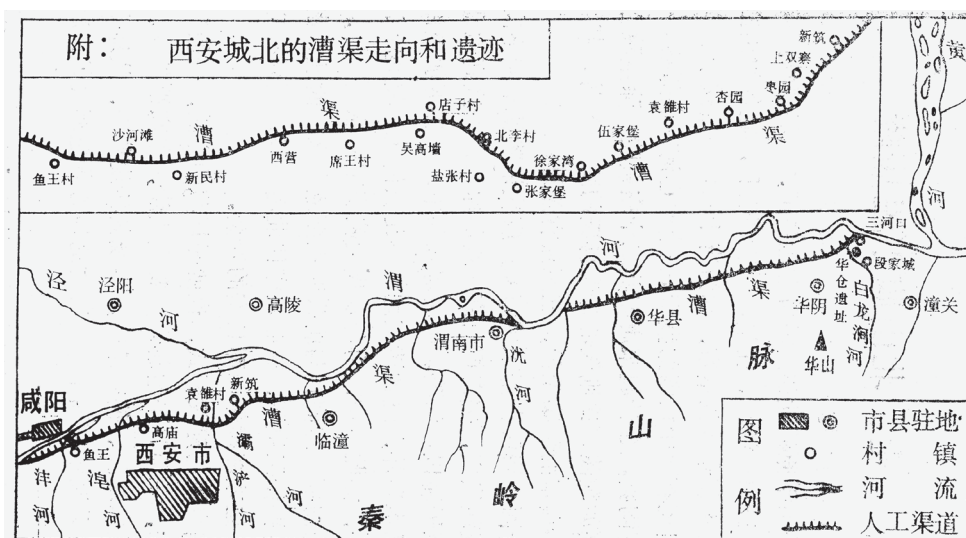
SIX SUPPORT (LIUFU) CANALS (built by Ni Kuan in 111 BCE), each of whose six "supports" was a feeder line extending south of the Zheng Guo Canal, so as to expand that earlier canal's reach into more farmland in Guanzhong; insofar as this network helped to alleviate droughts, it, too, was the subject of popular songs in Western Han.³⁸

A total of 680,000 *mu* (31,620 hectares) were said to be watered by these man-made canals.³⁹ Inevitably, by Chengdi's reign later in Western Han, many smaller canals had been dug in the Chang'an area to irrigate ever more cropland.⁴⁰

Three main canal systems ran south of the Wei River in Western Han: the Lingchi Canal, built under Wudi;⁴¹ the Kunming Canals (or Lines); and the Transport Canal. Very little is known about the Lingchi Canal, except that it was built under Han Wudi after 111 BCE. Although Li Daoyuan's somewhat reliable *Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*, comp. ca. 527 CE) equated the Lingchi Canal with the lower branches of the Menglong Canal (an opinion seconded by the modern scholar Huang Yaoneng), this is almost certainly wrong, since it ignores the many early sources specifying the

location of the Lingchi Canal in Shanglin Park, south of the Wei River.⁴² Still, the debates surrounding the location of the Lingchi Canal pale in comparison with the confusion surrounding the number, location, and relative efficiency of the Kunming Canals, including the Kunming “Old Canal.” There is probably no way to sort out the location of these Kunming Canals, absent new archaeological finds, given that the early authoritative sources such as the *Shuijing zhu* and the *Yonglu* (*Record of Yong*, comp. 1131–62 CE) are in complete contradiction; the extant literary sources fail to distinguish the Western Han Kunming Canals from the Tang canals, and they differently describe how the Western Han canals made use of several preexisting canals.⁴³

By contrast, the early sources definitively state the location and history of the Transport Canal (Map 3.04). The Wei River was the river nearest to Chang'an city bridges and wharves,⁴⁴ but it meandered through the Guanzhong basin. Thus, before the Transport Canal was built in the early part of Wudi's reign, bulky goods had to travel some 900 *li* (373.5 km) to make the journey by water, along the Yellow River, from the North China Plain to the Western Han capital—a trip, we are told, that could take up to six months.⁴⁵ In 129 BCE, Zheng Dangshi, then Commissioner of Agriculture, recommended to Wudi's court that a major Transport Canal be built to improve the situation.⁴⁶ A waterworks specialist named Xu Bo was deputed to supervise tens of thousands of conscript laborers constructing the Transport Canal, which took three years to complete. When it was finally opened in 126 BCE, the Transport Canal nearly halved the distance and time involved for shipments to the capital.⁴⁷ The savings to the capital region's economy were stunning, in view of the ever-increasing amount of grain and other supplies needed for the rapidly growing population of the greater metropolitan Chang'an region.⁴⁸



MAP 3.04 The Transport Canal. Reproduced from Ma Zhenglin 1986, 177.

The Bao–Xie Transport Canal,⁴⁹ meant to function in connection with the famed Bao–Xie Road, was to facilitate grain transport into the Guanzhong basin using two rivers, the Bao and the Xie, which both started in the Qinling Mountains; these two rivers were only about 100 *li* (41.5 km) from the Wei River. As water transport via the Yangzi from south and east of the Guanzhong basin normally had to navigate the treacherous rocks and rapids at the present-day Sanmen Gorges, a new transport route was proposed to neatly circumvent those dangers. By the proposed plan, grain from such rich areas of Nanyang and Hanzhong, as well as lumber from the Guanzhong basin's encircling mountains, would be mostly transported on ships to the capital. Goods from Nanyang were to travel from the upper reaches of the Mian River (now called the Han), a tributary of the Yellow River, directly to the Bao River. Then the items would continue traveling by ship until the point where the Bao was closest to the Xie River (a distance of slightly more than 100 *li*), after which overland transport would haul the goods along the Bao–Xie Road until they arrived at the Xie River. From there, goods would then travel once more by water, until they reached the point where the Xie emptied into the Wei River, at which juncture they would travel down the Wei to the capital. Some tens of thousands of workers were dispatched to build the necessary canals to link parts of this system, working under the direction of the Governor of Hanzhong.

However sensible the plan seemed, this particular canal project was a failure, insofar as the early transport ships continued to encounter difficulty circumventing the rocks and rapids along the way. In 17 BCE, Chengdi, like Wudi before him, ordered his officers to destroy the obstructing rocks; but after several years the work crews had made little progress, so work was halted. Only the overland Bao–Xie Road from Hanzhong turned out to be of enduring value to the empire; eventually it became one of the most important roads linking the areas north and south of the Qinling Mountains to the capital.

Besides the above-mentioned irrigation and transport facilities, the construction during Wudi's era of the man-made Jiao River, running east–west and linking the Jue River with the Feng, was critical from mid-Western Han times on for the efficient management of the water intake and outflow systems near Chang'an. The Jiao River, like many of the canals already listed, served the additional function of forcing the rivers nearer the capital to flow farther before they emptied into the Wei River, thereby decreasing the chances of flooding on the Wei during rainy seasons.⁵⁰

Turning to the all-important question of drainage and sewage, Western readers familiar with imperial Rome will recall that by the fourth century CE (but not earlier), Rome had the gigantic Cloaca Maxima system, so what can we say about Western Han Chang'an four centuries before that sewer system?⁵¹ One expert of early Chang'an history, Xu Weimin, unambiguously states that the Chang'an sewage system diverted wastewater directly to the moat surrounding the city in special five-sided pipes (Fig. 3.01a–d).⁵² (Xu argues that the water intake pipes were round.) Channels dug for the five-sided sewage pipes tended to be 1.2–1.6 meters wide and 1.4 meters high. A second

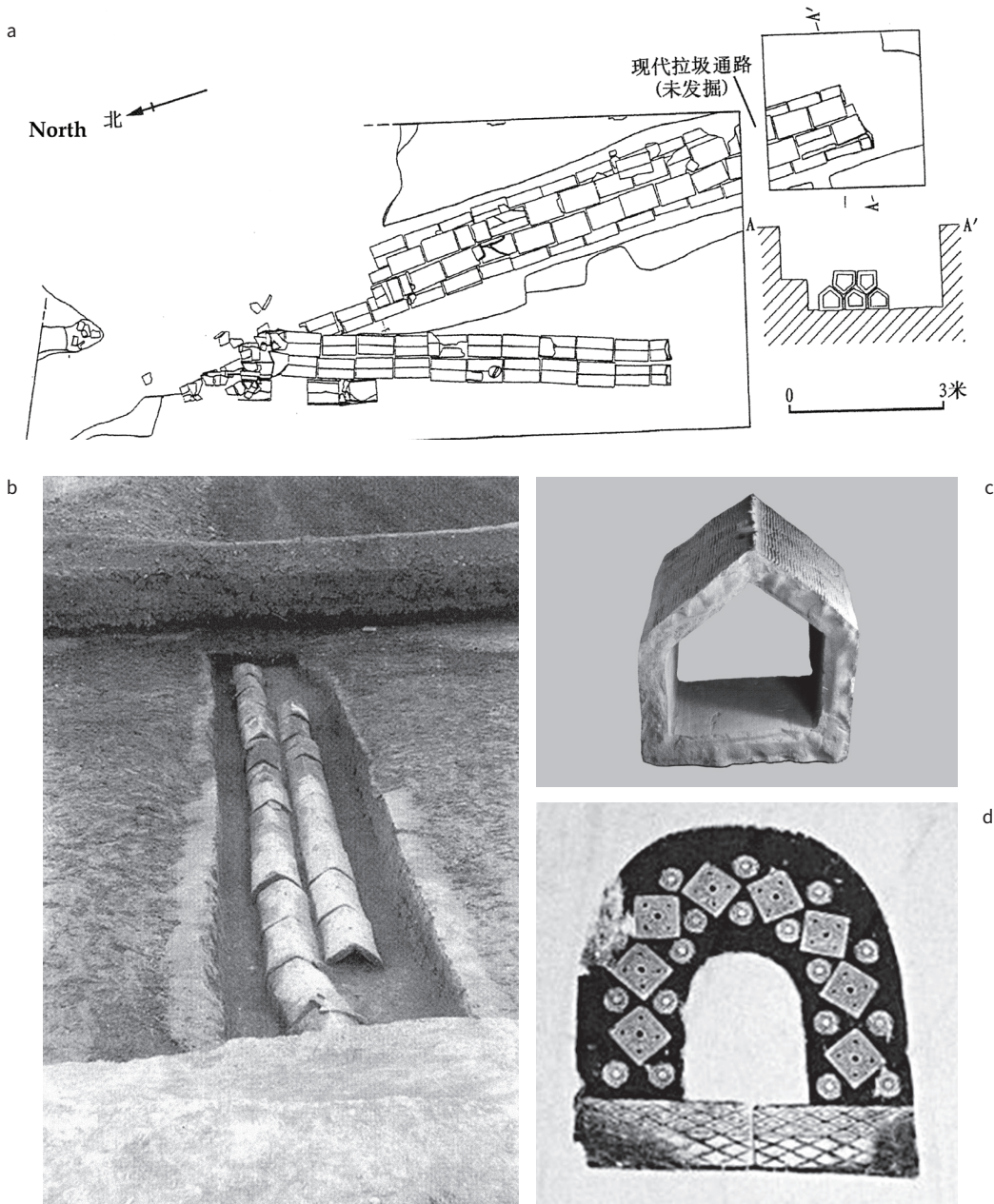


FIG. 3.01 Freshwater intake versus sewage outflow pipes: (a) Line drawing of a cross-section of a pipeline believed to have been used in the Changle Palace. Reproduced with permission from Wenwu chubanshe, from *Kaogu* 2003, fig. 2. (b) Drains in situ at the Weiyang Palace. (c) Pentagonal pipe, used for sewage outflow. Photograph by Michael Nylan of Image 2194 in the Xi'an City Museum. (d) Rubbing of the drainage pipes for Changle Palace, graced with elegant stamped designs, suggesting the luxury status of water systems. Maoling Museum, photograph by Michael Nylan.

expert, the local archaeologist Chai Yi, speaks of many stone tanks or cisterns found outside the base of the city's perimeter walls, which local scholars surmise represent the collection points for Chang'an's wastewater and sewage. If the foregoing is true, the two systems of clean water and wastewater may have been rigorously separated throughout the entire Chang'an water system, in what would have been a distinct improvement over early imperial practices in Rome.⁵³ This separation of clean water inflow from sewage, along with the popularity of boiling water for tea (well-attested before the reign of Chengdi's father began in 48 BCE), may have contributed to lower rates of waterborne diseases in the capital, though further research is necessary to verify such tentative conclusions.

As is clear, the construction of these new water systems, with the consequent diversion of water resources from older waterways, became one of the most important "architectural signifiers" of the empire and of imperial projects (see Map 3.02). Far from being merely mechanisms to obviate flooding or supply the capital with stable transport and supplies, these water systems constituted an excellent means of asserting power through monumental structures. Advertising the new scale and concentration of human effort and skill devoted to servicing the empire's capital—some 60,000 laborers and transport workers is one number cited for one single year⁵⁴—the imperial hydraulic systems reshaped the capital environs in ways calculated to impress residents and visitors alike. Clean water, leisure activities in abundance, verdure, and parks—all consummate urban amenities—were among the gracious gifts of the Western Han emperors, it seemed.⁵⁵ Quite apart from this notion of imperial largesse (and even somewhat at odds with it), during the reigns of Chengdi's father and Chengdi himself there was also evolving the contrary notion that the central government should, above all, "not trouble the common people." But if, in the preindustrial age, massive call-ups of *corvée* (and convict?) laborers were required to keep the canal and drainage systems clear of sludge and silt, and if Chengdi and his father had been loathe to order the requisite numbers of workers to the usual trouble spots, this would help explain the occasional grain shortages during Chengdi's reign, as well as the frequent floods, including the most famous in 30 BCE.⁵⁶

Food Supply at the Western Han Capital

The greater metropolitan Chang'an region included multiple transit collection points for food supplies destined, not only the capital, but also for the northwestern frontier defenses. Nor can we forget that at least some proportion of Western Han officials were paid largely through grain allotments, and that members of the governing elite viewed land for growing grain as the safest and most ennobling form of property. Therefore the subject of the granaries in Chang'an and its environs is vital to understanding the administration of both the capital and the empire at large, as well as the region's economic basis.⁵⁷ The elaborate system of waterways discussed above carried goods (espe-

cially grain) to the capital; we now turn more specifically to the subject of provisioning the capital with grain and other foodstuffs.

Thanks to the received literature and some newly excavated materials, we now know quite a bit about food in Western Han.⁵⁸ (Among the received texts, the monograph *Fan Shengzhi shu*, or *Fan Shengzhi's Writings*, devoted to household management, dates to Chengdi's reign. And from Juyan and Dunhuang we have documents specifying the rations of grain and salt allowed servicemen and their families, with differentiation according to sex and age.)⁵⁹ Most people in Han subsisted very simply on pancakes, wheat, rice, millet, barley, soybeans, sweet bean stew, and greens—dishes whose ingredients farming people could grow for themselves.⁶⁰ Roughly speaking, by late Western Han the monthly food allowance per person was 3 bushels of grain.⁶¹ By modern agrarian historians' estimates (with all the problems thereof), consumption standards in late Western Han were nearly as high as those during the high Tang, estimated at 597 kilograms of processed grain per person.⁶² But even if these very rough figures are correct, they only represent average consumption, which means the very poor lacked enough food (Chart 3.01).

The greater metropolitan Chang'an region produced a large amount of grain itself. Yet more grain poured in from the Ba, Shu, and Hanzhong Commanderies near Chang'an. But given the continual struggles over transport from these regions

Dynasty	Cultivated land ratio	Proportion of cultivated land in grain	Population (in tens of millions)	Land in grain per person	Grain produced per mu (in jin)	Grain per person (in mu)	Productivity of land in grain	Husked grain per person	Ratio of work to production of grain	
									Unhusked	Husked
Mid- / Late 'Zhanguo	0.9	0.846	0.2	4.26	216	921	61.1	563	3318	2027
Late Western Han	2.38	2.24	0.595	3.76	264	993	60.13	597	3578	2151
Tang	2.11	1.99	0.529	3.76	334	1256	52.96	665	4524	2396
Song	4.15	3.9	1.04	3.75	369	1159	52.2	605	4175	2179
Ming	4.65	4.2	1.3	3.32	346	1118	56	626	4027	2255
Mid-Qing	7.27	6.18	3.61	1.71	367	628	55.7	350	2262	1260

Hou Yongjian, after 吴慧: 《中国历代粮食亩产研究》1985, p. 194.

CHART 3.01 Estimated land-to-people ratio per dynasty, with ratio of husked/unhusked grain expressed into kilos per person. Reproduced with the author's permission from Hou Yongjian 2011, 302–3. Hou supplied the land-to-people ratio in *mu*, and he calculated the food in *shijin* (market kilograms).

via the Bao–Xie Transport Canal, shipments of grain and consumer goods continued to arrive in the capital from the “area east of the passes” mainly via water. In early Western Han, several hundred thousand bushels of grain were brought into Chang’an per year from the east; this figure increased exponentially by 129 BCE, when more than 1 million bushels of grain were imported into Chang’an. By 119 BCE, the number rose to 4 million bushels; by 110 BCE, six million⁶³—whence the compelling need to initiate major water canal projects during Wudi’s reign. By 2 CE, nine years after Chengdi’s death, the needs of the capital apparently had doubled once again; by all accounts, the minimum amount of grain needed to simply prevent starvation of the Greater Chang’an population in Chengdi’s era was 12,284,424 bushels (18 bushels of grain/year/resident).⁶⁴

When it came to grain, the old Qin capital of Xianyang had been largely dependent upon the Ao Granary, built by the pre-imperial Qin state before unification in 221 BCE, near the Honggou Canal, close to Xingyang.⁶⁵ At this point in time, textual and archaeological sources reveal the existence of at least twenty-one granaries in or near the Western Han capital.⁶⁶ Six granaries are most frequently mentioned in connection with the capital during Western Han, as indicated on Map 3.02:

GREAT GRANARY, built by Xiao He in 200 BCE, at roughly the same time as the palace armory, traditionally said to be southeast of the city perimeter walls of Chang’an, near the Transport Canal. More recent speculation and a Song map place this granary inside the city walls, in the southeastern portion of the Weiyang Palace.⁶⁷ A Great Granary Master resided within Chang’an city, certainly. (Archaeologists have located a Great Granary near Luoyang that served the Eastern Han rulers, but they have not located the Western Han Great Granary.)⁶⁸

CAPITAL GRANARY, some 130 kilometers east of Chang’an, located south of the bend of the Wei River, roughly 2 kilometers from where the Yellow, Luo, and Wei Rivers met below Fenghuang Peak in Hua county; this was the place where the Transport Canal entered the Wei, only 10 kilometers away from Tong Pass, which marked the easternmost boundary of Guanzhong.⁶⁹ Archaeologists in 1980–1981 CE located six separate granaries belonging to the single complex, after which they produced a complete excavation report for the ruin. The size of these granaries built during Han Wudi’s reign is stunning. Granary 1, for example, measured an estimated 1,662.5 square meters. Based on an inscription found on ornamental roof tile ends at the Capital Granary complex, most PRC scholars presume the Hua Granary is but an alternative name for one or more parts of the Capital Granary.⁷⁰

XILIU (SLENDER WILLOW) GRANARY,⁷¹ north of the Wei River and south of Liangsidu, at present-day Lü village, Fengxiang county, near old Xianyang.

Archaeologists in 1989 CE believed they had located the site of this granary, based on a chance find of an ornamental roof tile end bearing the characters for “Million Bushel Granary” (but see below).

THE JIAHE (AUSPICIOUS GRAIN) GRANARY,⁷² east of Chang’an city and the Slender Willow Granary, and somewhat north of the Great Granary.

SWEET SPRINGS GRANARY, near the Sweet Springs Palace north of Chang’an city, perhaps as much as 100 kilometers away, in present-day Yunyang and Chunhua counties, near the Ganquan mountains,⁷³ which the sources say measured 1,466,000 square meters.

PIER GRANARY, about 160 kilometers west of old Chang’an, near the juncture of the Qian and Wei Rivers, close to the site of the Yuyang Palace, part of the Qinian Palace complex near Baoji.⁷⁴ Some archaeologists now argue that the ornamental roof tile end bearing the mark “Million Bushel Granary” belongs to this granary, not the Slender Willow Granary.⁷⁵

Regarding the “Million Bushel Granary” roof tile end, nothing logically precludes the same characters being used to identify two or more major capital granaries. After all, from the reign of Xuandi (73–49 BCE) the rubric “Chang’an granaries” apparently applied to three complexes, the Xiliu, Jiahe, and Great Granary. In any case, by late Western Han the combined capacity of those three granaries alone equaled 6 million bushels of grain.

Thanks to the careful excavations at the Capital Granary and Pier Granary Storehouse sites, as well as the hundreds of granary models that have been found in excavated tombs, we know a fair bit about Western Han granaries (Fig. 3.02a–b). All were solidly built, with massive perimeter walls of rammed earth enclosing the complexes. Inside the enclosures, the individual warehouses had thick rammed-earth walls, densely positioned internal pillars to bear the weight of tons of grain, narrow windows placed high up on the warehouse walls to impede theft, and much smaller vents placed near the raised rammed-earth floors to ensure good ventilation. Within each warehouse, large square windows promoted the free circulation of air from one room to another. Separate compartments subdivided each warehouse into smaller units, so that grain stores could be conveniently withdrawn in discrete lots. Judging from the Pier Granary Storehouse, the side walls of the warehouses were also specially treated in order to minimize moisture seepage.⁷⁶ In addition, all warehouses in the imperial granary complexes would have boasted the sort of raised floors seen in so many granary models, these being designed to store grain at an optimal temperature, free of ground moisture and pesky vermin. Roofs are missing from all excavated examples of large-scale granary units, but high-pitched ridge roofs presumably diverted rain away from the foundations, and empty corridors placed between adjoining warehouses effectively functioned as firewalls. Such practical features made the Chinese granaries astonishingly similar to those we know from Ostia, Portus, and Rome—so much so that a non-

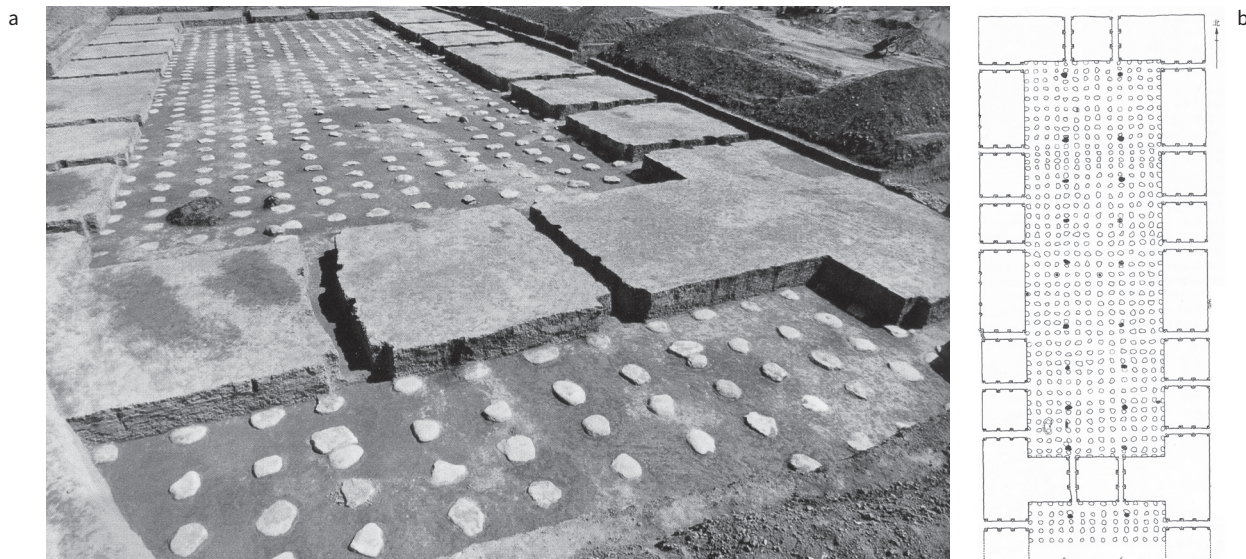


FIG. 3.02 Chang'an granaries: (a) Aerial view of the Capital Granary (Jingshi Cang), dating to Western Han. Reproduced with permission from the *Kaogu* journal, from *Kaogu*, no. 7 (2005): back cover. (b) Line drawing of the Pier Granary Storehouse site at Fengxiang. Reproduced with permission from Tian Yaqi et al. 2006, 54. Interested readers should also consult *Xi Han jingshi cang*.

specialist would find it hard to distinguish one empire's granary from that of the other (see Fig. 3.02a–b).⁷⁷

In the aftermath of Wudi's disastrous reign marked by so many wars of foreign aggression, the court of his successor Xuandi attempted to stabilize food prices at the frontiers via a complex government system called the Ever-Normal or Ever-Level Granary system. According to the standard histories,

At the time of Zhaodi (r. 87–74 BCE), farmers who had drifted away [to other occupations] gradually returned to their fields, with the result that . . . there were considerable stores of grain. When Xuandi came to the throne [in 73 BCE], . . . year after year the harvests were good. But then grain fell in price to a mere five cash per measure so the farmers made too little profit. Geng Shou-chang, Deputy to the Commissioner of Agriculture at the time, was favored by the emperor because of his skills in calculating budgets and profits.

During the Wufeng reign period (57–54 BCE), Geng submitted a memorial to the throne, saying: "In the past, each year 4 million bushels of grain were transported by water from the area east of the passes to the capital, employing sixty thousand conscripts. It would be more proper that grain sufficient to supply the capital should be bought within the metropolitan region, and from Hongnong, Hedong, Shangdang, and Taiyuan Commanderies. This would save

more than half of the conscripts engaged in the water transport from the lands east of the passes.” He also suggested that taxes on products from the lakes should be increased threefold. The emperor followed his suggestions.

The Imperial Counsellor Xiao Wangzhi (d. 46 BCE) submitted a memorial to the throne in protest [objecting to the policy’s cost in terms of men and materiel]. Later, in 54 BCE, Geng Shouchang suggested that the frontier commanderies be ordered to erect granaries so that at times when grain was cheap it could be bought for storage at an increased price, in this way benefiting the farmers; then, when grain was expensive, it could be released for sale from storage at a decreased price [in this way benefitting the nonfarming population]. The granaries built under this policy were dubbed “Ever-Normal Granaries.”⁷⁸

People evidently found these price supports advantageous for a while, but once official corruption set in, with the consequent manipulation of prices, objections began to pour into the capital.⁷⁹ According to the standard histories, in 44 BCE the Ever-Normal Granaries were abolished in the militarized zones on the northern frontier by Chengdi’s father, during a time of great floods and famine; presumably they had already been dismantled in areas near the capital. Nonetheless, there are some indications that after 44 BCE, at least some granaries (perhaps only those on the frontiers?) continued to function to regulate and stabilize grain prices for the residents of the greater metropolitan Chang’an area.⁸⁰ For example, Gu Yong spoke in his memorial of 12 BCE in this way: “They [the less fortunate and the displaced] have flocked to the passes [entering the metropolitan area in hopes of buying grain more cheaply there].”⁸¹ Liu Tseng-kuei, like this chapter’s author, believes this means that the system was not discontinued entirely, at least on the frontiers. If this surmise is correct, such government interventions would have helped, albeit indirectly, mitigate problems with the capital’s grain reserves and grain prices.⁸²

Overland Transport

Little has been said above about land transport. It was much more costly and hence much more local; overland transport ideally was mainly used to transport perishable items or items having little bulk and weight from locations near the capital, as few (perhaps none?) outside the imperial house had access to icehouses (Fig. 3.03; cf. Map 3.05). (Qin’s First Emperor, for example, when battling the nomadic peoples, ordered the transport of basic commodities to the northern loop of the Yellow River at a cost of 30 *zhong* of grain for one peck delivered, a ratio of 192:1.)⁸³ Nonetheless, six aspects of roads during the early empires command our attention today: (1) the basic structure of the road network itself, as revealed in newly excavated documents and sites; (2) the regulations for road building, maintenance, and use; (3) the hierarchical road network

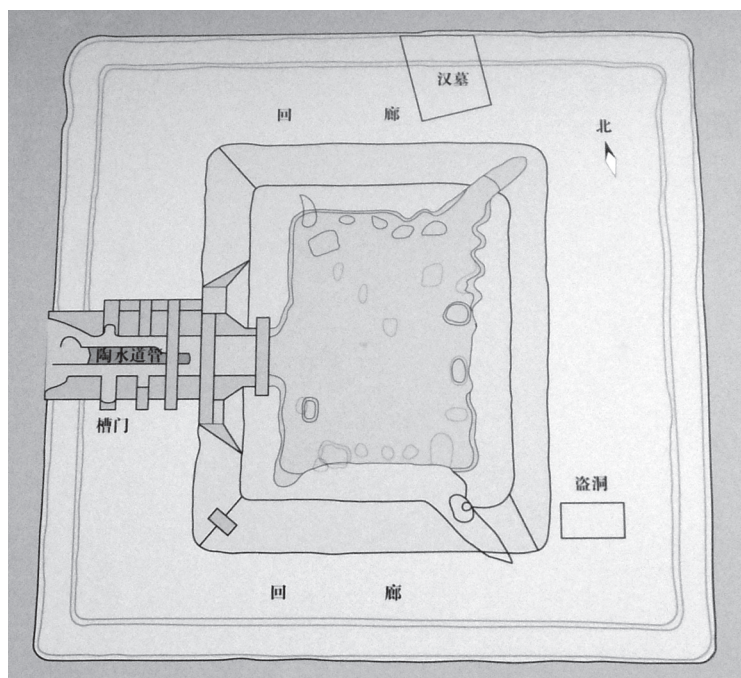
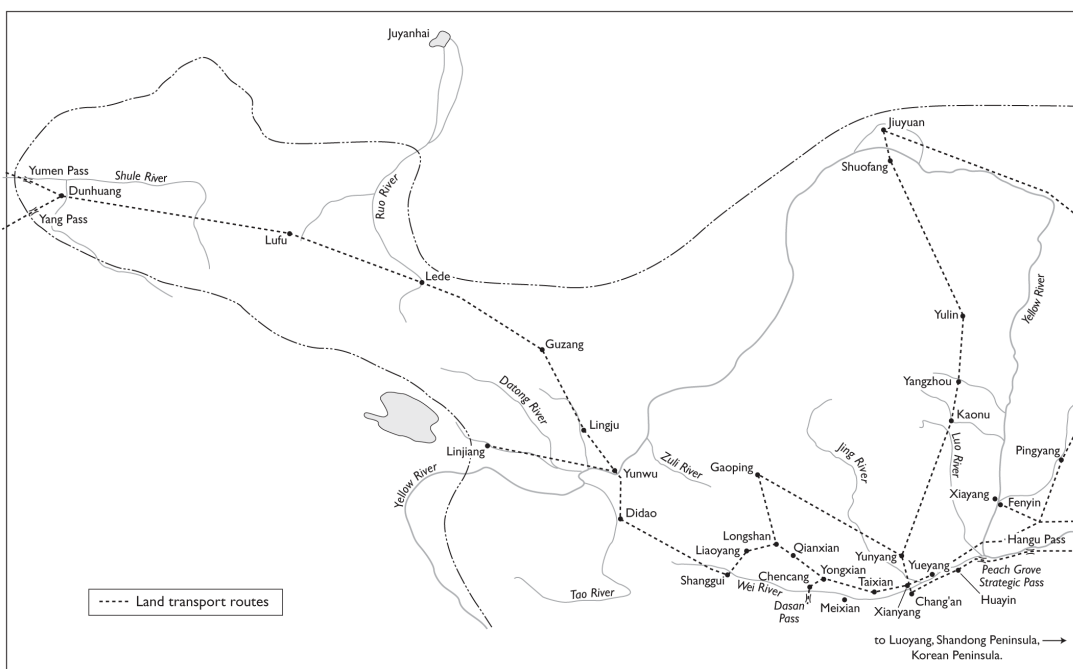


FIG. 3.03 Site plan of the excavated icehouse in the Changle Palace. Photograph by Michael Nyland of the original mounted on the wall of the reception area of Xi'an's Institute of Archaeology.

as a key instantiation of political power; (4) the various metaphorical emphases placed on “paths” and “the Way” in political and moral treatises, with talk of infrastructure generally leading to discussions of communication and communicativeness versus rebellion, prestige versus exploitation and downfall, and long-term investment in productive social relations versus short-term profit; (5) the consequent perception of roads as forces for good or ill in society;⁸⁴ and (6) the many shrines erected to road builders (also to bridge and canal builders, given that roads and waterways are conflated in the Han sources) and the sacrifices offered to road gods.

These six topics are seamlessly related in the sources, excavated and received. But the evidence to date for each of these topics is unevenly distributed within the archaeological and received records, making it impossible to precisely reconstruct all the networks of meaning once attached to highways and byways, or the probable links between the ethical implications of road metaphors and the road cults that dotted the vast territory now known as China, especially given the losses from and emendations to the original sources.⁸⁵ From the last two centuries before the misnamed “Common Era,” aside from brief notices about road markers at boundary lines, there survives but a single inscription relating to roads.⁸⁶ With the number of early archaeological sites accelerating at a breakneck pace, we should expect breakthroughs in research on road networks and their associations. But for now, sweeping generalizations frequently mask fragile hypotheses that will likely be overturned by the next major archaeological find. That caveat is best kept in mind as we turn to our current evidence, which suggests that



MAP 3.05 Major overland transportation routes coming from and going into the Western Han capital of Chang'an, so far as we can reconstruct them from the standard histories and from two modern works of historical geography: Tan Qixiang's set of historical maps, in *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji*, and Tan Zhongyi 1967. Several places shown are now better known by modern names, for example, Kaonu (present-day Yan'an), Yangzhou (present-day Anding), and Peach Grove Strategic Pass (known by its Tang dynasty name, Tong Pass). Map generated by Bill Nelson.

the early Chinese road system represented a unique network of meanings not entirely commensurable with the Roman highways.

In treatises planning the full integration of the disparate parts of the realm under the court's supervision, the two most important factors making for dynastic strength were identified as population growth and improvements in transport facilities. To conquer and civilize a vast area required road building on an unprecedented scale. Some historians, early and modern, believe that the pre-dynastic Qin state's eventual success over six rival kingdoms is directly traceable to the roads it laid out in Shu (modern Sichuan) in 316 BCE, as these allowed the efficient exploitation of the area's minerals and foodstuffs by the Qin court at Xianyang hundreds of kilometers away.⁸⁷ Then, in 135 BCE, generals and envoys were dispatched once more to impress the locals into corvée service throughout Shu, to secure the southwest as a launching pad for further conquest out to Kangju (Bactria?). In one effort reported in the first standard history, a "labor force of twenty to thirty thousand men were put to work building a road" that was still not completed after two years of grueling work. Shortly thereafter a second

sustained effort yielded a long road through the Ling Pass, plus a bridge spanning the broad Sun River.⁸⁸ This sort of effort—fiercely debated in the histories and philosophical texts of the period—tended to mark centralizing processes in the classical era, for it enabled the forced migrations of up to 100,000 people at a time to the outlying areas.⁸⁹

By Chengdi's era, two main highway systems joined the greater metropolitan Chang'an region with points outside the Guanzhong basin. The first highway system, known as the Gaoping Road, connected Yunyang and Gaoping via several spur lines. The sources could hardly be more vague about the precise routes taken by this first highway system, however; they remark only that this was the route Chengdi's forebears took when leaving the capital to worship at Yong, due west of Chang'an,⁹⁰ and that the route somehow connected with the Huizhong Road and Huizong Palace (whose locations are hotly disputed). A modern historical geographer provides us with a tentative reconstruction of the highway system, arguing that its route basically circled from one plain to the next, around the perimeter of the Guanzhong basin (Map 3.05; see also Map 1.04b).⁹¹

The second main highway system connected the capital and western Guanzhong ultimately with the Western Regions, via a northwesterly route that passed through Tianshui via the Longxi Corridor and from there to the Jade Pass, the last stop before leaving the Han realm for the area now called Xinjiang. A somewhat smaller highway called the Straight Road ran northward (if more crookedly than its name suggests), passing through present-day Yan'an, to Shuofang Commandery. Because this commandery was the front line of defense against various nomadic groups living in the northwest frontier zone, the Straight Road was of great strategic importance, with men and materiel constantly moving along this route. Other roads followed the course of the Wei River more closely, on both its northern and southern banks, until the Wei connected with the Luo and Yellow Rivers; the roads then followed the Yellow River east until the Tong Pass (identified also as the Heng Pass in Han), at which point the roads fanned out to east of Guanzhong, with one road reaching deep into the present-day Korean Peninsula.⁹²

As the historian Sima Qian (ca. 145–186 BCE) noted, from the fourth century BCE on, the conscious goal of centralizing states was to increase “the multitudes of the subject populations and the numbers of carriages and horses” so that “night and day, there would be ceaseless travel.”⁹³ Thanks in large part to several discovered caches of legal documents, modern historians can be sure of the intensity of the elite's preoccupation with roads, communication, and transport as vital to the “great enterprise” of empire. Perhaps for that reason, suspiciously exact figures exist for the total of roads built during Qin (but, strangely enough, not for either Zhanguo or Western Han) (see Map 1.04a–b).⁹⁴ By careful design, the stepped hierarchy of the classical-era roadways reflected the supposedly natural hierarchies prevailing in human society, with the Middle Path of the widest and most level “highways” (*chidao*) reserved for the sole use of the emperor, the political and religious “center” of the realm and the physical embodiment

of cosmic resonance.⁹⁵ In addition to the *chidao*, a great number of elevated enclosed roads and roads between high palisades or palace walls (*fudao* and *yongdao*, respectively) were built for the exclusive use of the First Emperor and the members of his inner circle; and, in 212 BCE, some two hundred of these roads were consolidated into a single system in the capital district and its immediate environs, so that the emperor's movements could go undetected. The attention that such a spectacularly secret network of roads garnered merely heightened the sharp contrast of the imperial network vis-à-vis the lesser roads of the empire, especially as the steeply graded hierarchy of roads paralleled the strict urban hierarchy outlined in Qin and Han policy statements. Such statements envisioned the capital region looming above the capitals of kingdoms, commanderies, and local centers at the county level. Evidence that the full integration of the empire was nonetheless a slow and painful process comes from casebooks from early Western Han, which plainly allude to barriers and checkpoints at the borders between kingdoms (by Chengdi's time, no longer under indirect rule) in the empire and the commanderies and counties administered by the imperial court.⁹⁶ Apparently, distinct legal systems were employed in the two sorts of units, at least during the early decades of the two Han dynasties.⁹⁷

Though generally perceived by Han thinkers as a natural and organic system, the roads, like the waterways, presumably required constant human intervention and adjustment to ensure proper functioning. Hence the imposition of an unambiguous hierarchy of broad thoroughfares to secondary paths, as well as routine checks on the number and quality of contacts between units. In this life and the next, there were to be passports, tallies, and rations for official travelers, also regular checks at passes, boundaries, and relay stations, and so on.⁹⁸ (We have one Zhanguo example of a decorative tally awarded a merchant by the pre-unification Thane of Chu.) Nor can we overestimate the role of the road system within the sumptuary regulations (called "carriages and robes" for short) so dear to state planners and well-born families. Under the aristocratic system inherited by the early empires, nobles had proudly displayed themselves in outings, excursions, and progresses to demonstrate their awesome authority to "those below"; under the imperial administration, the road system continued to support the ties between sumptuary regulations and display culture, even as new elaborations and refinements were continually added.⁹⁹ The regulations required high-ranking officials and members of the nobility to travel on the highways in carriages, whenever possible, rather than on horseback, to uphold the graded system of ranks and honors.¹⁰⁰ And chariots remained one of the key status indicators in death, just as in life.¹⁰¹

Unless grain and cash crops moved swiftly along the arteries of empire, the central government's efforts encouraging agriculture would likely come to naught. Judging from an edict of 21 BCE, during Chengdi's reign, those of ministerial rank were specifically charged with seeing that the empire's primary system of roads remained at all times "passable." In particular, the Commissioner of Agriculture was to oversee the speedy transport of grains and provisions in the provinces outside the central part

of the empire, and especially in frontier zones.¹⁰² Small wonder that various laws of the classical era cast road maintenance, along with wall building and repair, as part of the “routine [corvée] work,” for which the local controller of works and the builder together annually estimated what size of conscript labor levies was needed.¹⁰³ Regular clearing of the roads, as well as any dangerous passages, was to occur every year in the ninth month (i.e., early winter), while retamping and facing occupied farmers during much of the tenth and last month of the calendar year.¹⁰⁴ By statutory law, road maintenance also had to be carried out whenever “holes and bad places” made it “impossible to proceed.”¹⁰⁵ Detailed stipulations specified the duties, rations, and acceptable limits of travel for coachmen, guards, messengers, and envoys on official business, and even for horses and oxen as the two main draft animals besides humans.¹⁰⁶ The laws gave elaborate provisions for the state guesthouses placed at intervals along the major highways.¹⁰⁷ Obviously, the dynasty hoped to control the flow of people, things, and ideas as much as possible, lest too much commerce and movement disrupt subject populations engaged in sedentary agriculture, long considered the basis of stable rule within civil society. Statutes covered conduct at the passes, formal city markets, and “control points” between administrative units, and also the infantry conscripts guarding the posts and passes.¹⁰⁸

Predictably enough, the regulations for an elementary postal or courier system in Qin and Western Han are equally detailed. One sample law from Shuihudi reads: “When horses of the courier service are used, they are given one feeding of grain. When they return, they are again given one feeding. Always eight horses are to be [fed or kept?] together. When used repeatedly, the horses should be given one feeding without letting a day [of rest] go by. When [an officer of the central government] uses horses from the county, and these have done heavy work, they should again be given one additional feeding of grain.”¹⁰⁹ Such courier horses, used singly or as teams in relays, could cover long distances in no time (Fig. 3.04). One figure for Han times says that while relay riders sent from Chang’an in a crisis were expected to cover 135 *li* (some 56 km) in a day, 600 *li* (some 249 km) in one day was not unknown.¹¹⁰ But in a major crisis, three different sets of relay riders were sent out, in the hopes that one set would manage 1,000 *li* in twenty-four hours.¹¹¹ Post-horses (literally, “racers”) were “warranted” when they carried legal documents and the sealed evidence for criminal cases, and possibly for important civil suits as well.¹¹² One extant Statute on Agriculture decreed that local officials must quickly alert the court to news of local disasters (especially rains, droughts, violent winds, or hordes of insects or rats), presumably to coordinate famine relief. Rebellions and upheavals were reported promptly. Counties near the capital were to have special runners deliver this sort of information, while the outlying counties used the courier service.¹¹³ Unfortunately, neither the standard histories nor the excavated sources allow us to surmise whether and to what degree this system could be utilized for private purposes. A single early statement says that during the first years of Eastern Han, private use of this service was forbidden, but



FIG. 3.04 Painted brick tomb tile of a relay horse with mounted courier, third–fourth century CE. Dimensions of original: 27 × 17.5 cm. Excavated from tomb no. 5 (M5) in Jiayuguan, Gansu. Reprinted from *Jiayuguan bihua mu fajue baogao* 1985, fig. 87, with permission from the Gansu Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, courtesy of Zhang Junmin, Institute of Archaeology in Gansu.

since that prohibition was announced during a civil war, it may have had little force in peacetime.

Similarly precise rules governed the transfer of goods (not documents) from one office to another. Large shipments of grain, silk, and metal—the currencies of the time—were moved constantly from one part of the empire to another, and certain regions within the empire had to deposit quotas of specialty items at designated sites as well.

When offices transfer goods to one another, they are to report in writing the year for which these goods were cancelled in the accounts. The recipient [office meanwhile] accounts it as entered. When there are transfers during the eighth and ninth months [of winter], the distance of the place where they are transferred is to be calculated. If it is not possible to arrive there before [the closing date of] the accounts of the place where the goods are transferred, shift the account to the next year. The accounts must not be confused with one another.¹¹⁴

Meanwhile, officials conducting public business away from their posts could always avail themselves of government transport or draft animals, so long as they provided the proper tallies and credentials for inspection as they passed through a territorial unit.¹¹⁵

Officials of the general offices, rank-holding officials, as well as Overseers of detached offices, each will have one cook. . . . For ten men, there will be one carriage and an ox, with one oxherd. Assistant Clerks who have been assigned

to the general offices will have one cook for ten men; for fifteen men, one carriage and an ox, with one oxherd. . . . Minor officers who have no Overseer will be given a servant, a carriage, and an ox, based on this rule.¹¹⁶

In severe crises, officials might sometimes be reduced to hiring private carriages, which practice they later had to justify in order to receive reimbursement. In mundane matters, officials used their allotted carriages and oxen to pick up their monthly food allowances from state granaries and storehouses, as well as the rations allotted for the draft animals in their service. The laws provided for the regular upkeep of carriages and animals, with one law stipulating even the amount of grease and glue to be used on government property,¹¹⁷ and a second, the leathers and textiles suitable for replacement parts.¹¹⁸ (A regular allowance for grease and glue was made to local officials for just such purposes.) But woe betide the unlucky official whose borrowed carriages sustained some damage, regardless of the reason,¹¹⁹ for if a borrower failed to repair a damaged cart or a carriage, not only he, but also “the [lending] official and the head of office,” were considered derelict in their duties, according to the laws.¹²⁰ A worse fate, if possible, awaited the official whose assigned horses or oxen died while in his care. The hides, horns, and bones had then to be handed over to a superior officer for inspection, along with detailed reports on the incident.¹²¹ Wounds to horses belonging to the dynasty (literally, “the ruler’s horses”) were punished with great severity also, with each tear in the animal’s hide calling for a fine somewhere between one metal shield and one full suit of armor.¹²²

Lest the foregoing leave readers with the mistaken impression that all or nearly all roads were publicly built and maintained during the Qin and Han empires, and all transport systems maintained under the direction of the imperial administration, the present evidence suffices to posit a mixed public/private system for road construction, road maintenance, and haulage during the early empires in China, as well as a mixed public/private postal service. Despite the truculent attitude that succeeding dynasties sometimes adopted toward merchants and other itinerant professions, by the fourth century BCE the regional economies in the area we call China today were so densely connected that the so-called great families could make hefty profits by setting up private courier stations and transport services, if they were careful not to abuse their statutory privileges.¹²³

Conclusion

While much remains to be done in terms of understanding the effect of climate and geography on the challenges of provisioning the city, the foregoing gives readers an idea of the current information available. In the last three centuries BCE, a huge number of agrotowns were transformed into vibrant commercial centers with permanent shops, a local housing market, and local factories, some of which were producing what

we would now deem “art.” In some senses, this chapter provides a part of the puzzle we will need to piece together if we are to begin to understand the archaeology of the urban economy, not to mention the subelite lives, which seldom figure in research. Absent densely interwoven communication and transport facilities located throughout the empire—facilities conducive to the formation of commercial and patronage networks serving thriving communities of artisans, merchants, and professionals—it seems doubtful that the fabled Chang’an city life, with its range of populations and identities, could have been achieved, let alone sustained for long.

Notes

- 1 Many early texts testify to the early courts’ awareness of the crucial importance of provisioning the city. One rhymed couplet says, for example, “If the land lacks proper officials / there will be no stores of provisions.” See Richter 2013, 101, citing the *Guanzi*.
- 2 By contrast, at Baoji the plain is only 2–3 kilometers wide in most places, and never more than 10 kilometers. This chapter, unlike so many written in Chinese or Japanese, will not try to review the history of early “capitals,” if only because we cannot be sure whether and when the so-called capitals of Feng and Hao in Western Zhou (near the site of Chang’an) became permanent capitals. See Khayutina 2008.
- 3 As the Jue River nears Chang’an, it is often now identified as the Xue, but it is one and the same river (invariably called Jue in the early sources).
- 4 The Wei River empties into the plain west of Baoji, not at Chang’an. The Jing River was more important for Xianyang’s water supply than for Chang’an’s. Sima Xiangru, in *Shanglin fu*, says, “Vast and mighty, eight rivers flow in separate courses” (*dang dang ba chuan fenliu*). See *Sima Xiangru ji jiaozhu*, 17 (Zhu and Sun 1996).
- 5 That rivers south of the city tend to flow north was first explained in Southern Song in Cheng Dachang’s *Yonglu*, and painstaking work by Huang Shengzhang has only refined Cheng Dachang’s hypothesis.
- 6 Wudi constructed the man-made Jiao River for two reasons: to supply the Kunming Pond and also to join the Feng, Hao, and Jue Rivers. The Jiao River, quite exceptionally, flowed east–west. Li Daoyuan’s (466–527 CE) *Shuijing zhu*, compiled circa 527, treats the Jiao and Feng Rivers as if they were one. By Song times, Zhang Li, author of *You chengnan ji*, thinks the Jue River is just another name for the Jiao River. Such misidentifications have immensely complicated research in the old riverine systems. NB: An important tributary of the Jue River is called the Zao.
- 7 Although there were supposedly no fewer than sixteen important bridges near Chang’an, the early sources mostly talk of the three bridges over the Wei River and a bridge over the Ba River to the east of Chang’an. A beautiful set of pictures is available for a contemporaneous sluice gate in Guangzhou. See *Zhongguo zhongyao kaogu faxian* 2002, 92–96. See n. 11 below for the most recent excavations of the Wei River bridges, which make it clear that more than three bridges spanned the Wei River before Ming; right now we do not know how many of those bridges date to Qin or Western Han. For Guangzhou water transport, see Li Lingfu 2013.
- 8 Contra Hotaling 1978. Zhou Huijuan 2007, in fact, shows us by her citations that it is only later retrojections onto Qin and Han that identify the Longshou Plain as a special site for “kingly *qi*” or “imperial *qi*” (*Tianzi qi*). For example, a Jin-era tale says that Qin Shihuang saw *qi* in the area.
- 9 Fish were used at banquets for both the living and the dead. A well has been excavated in the Weiyang Palace complex; for a picture, see *Zhongguo kaogu xue, Qin Han juan* 2010, 598, figs.

9–20. In the same text, the facing page (p. 599) illustrates other wells, one an Eastern Han grave-good model and another a line drawing of a mural that probably dates to Eastern Han as well.

- 10 For a summary of the Qin initiatives (chiefly the Zheng Guo Canal, the Dujiang Dike, and the Zhang River), see *Zhongguo kaogu xue*, *Qin Han juan* 2010, 593–94; also Peng Xi 1986.
- 11 For a long time, historical geographers and archaeologists assumed that the creep northward was steady and incremental. Now, based on the ongoing Wei River excavations, archaeologists believe that the creep northward may be a Ming and post-Ming phenomenon (personal communication with Liu Rui, one of the excavators, February 2013). The Ba and Chan have kept to their old watercourses (their waters flowing largely without man-made canals).
- 12 The Transport Canal was finished in 126 BCE, six or seven years *before* the Kunming Pond and its Support Canals (see below in this chapter) became part of the immense system serving the city's largest water reservoir. Huge ships should therefore already have been plying the Transport Canal for some years by the time Kunming Pond was built.
- 13 Archaeologists have located the site, but the Tang reservoir at Kunming was bigger than the Han, its perimeter measuring 17.6 kilometers in length, with a surface area of 16.6 square kilometers, whereas the slightly smaller Han perimeter probably measured nearer 14.75 square kilometers.
- 14 Li Lingfu 2008 argues that Kunming Pond fulfilled an additional function, besides acting as water reservoir and drawing water into the city (*yinshui*): it drew water out of the city (*paishui*). See Li Lingfu 2008, 53–54n2; Liu and Zhang 2006.
- 15 Readers should note that the term “water pressure” in this chapter simply refers to the gravitational flow, but that pressure could be intense on the water pipes and had thus to be regulated.
- 16 This assertion—first hazarded by Hu Sanxing, thirteenth-century commentator to the *Zizhi tongjian*—has been confirmed by recent archaeology. See Huang Shengzhang 1982, esp. 18.
- 17 The precise location of the Raise-Water Slope has not been found, though it must lie somewhere north of the old Epang Palace site and south of the Jianzhang Palace complex. For a Han dynasty model of the slope, see Qin Zhonghang 1976. For further information on the Han use of slopes in water control, see Guo Rongzhang 1991. Tan Qixiang and others have argued that flooding after Han Wudi in the lower reaches of the Yellow River was the most important source of unrest outside the Guanzhong area. See Tang and Xie 2012, 68n4. Certainly Western Han was warmer and wetter than Eastern Han. See Zhu Shiguang 2000, 36, citing Zhu Kezhen's 1972 classic work on climate change in China.
- 18 As Kunming Pond was located on high ground (some 400 m above sea level), once its waters got beyond Epang and the Three Bridges, the land formation would have caused the waters to flow too swiftly into the Wei River, had Wudi not built this Raise-Water Slope. Since that slope divided the water's course into two branches, the water flow became easier to control.
- 19 At its highest point, the Weiyang Palace Front Audience Hall is slightly more than 400 meters and so is higher than Kunming Pond, although most of the Weiyang Palace site is lower, at around 390 meters above sea level.
- 20 Liu and Zhang 2006. However, as Liu and Zhang note, another line running from Kunming was very narrow (only 5 m wide), so that it quickly silted up, and it was eventually abandoned in or before Tang times.
- 21 Cheng Dachang's *Yonglu* already understood this principle.
- 22 Li Lingfu 2004 thinks the Jue waters were merged into this flow; Huang Shengzhang 1982 thinks not. Since Kunming Pond was quite far away, it could not supply all of the city's needs at short notice; hence Cang Pond was built inside the city walls to function as a short-term reservoir (p. 20). Cf. Liu and Zhang 2006. Perhaps the Taiye Pond, built north of the Jianzhang Palace and southwest of the Weiyang Palace complex, also played a role. See *Sanfu huangtu*, in

- He Qinggu 1995/2006, 4.308–10.
- 23 Li Lingfu 2004, 104, 43, provides beautiful illustrations of this.
- 24 The early sources do not say. *Sanfu huangtu* does not even mention the Biao Pond. He Qinggu 1995/2006, 4.305, cites *Shiji* 6 to show that the Hao Pond was in place late in Qin Shihuang's reign; as readers will recall, Qin Shihuang had many traveling palaces built south of the Wei River, and the fact that *Sanfu huangtu*, in He Qinggu 1995/2006, specifies how many *qing* of fields Hao Pond irrigated (p. 33) suggests the pond was artificial.
- 25 Hao Pond was olive shaped; it occupied roughly 1,270 by 580 meters, with a circumference of 3,500 meters; its surface area was therefore about 0.5 square kilometers. The Biao Pond farther north was appreciably larger; it measured roughly 700 by 2,980 meters, with a circumference of 7,850 meters and a surface area about 1.81 square kilometers. See Li Lingfu 2008, 61–62n2.
- 26 The first omen consisted of children's ditties that sang of flooding in the capital city under Yuandi, Chengdi's father. See *Hanshu* 10.652; *Qian Hanji* 10.420; and Shao-yun Yang's chapter in this volume.
- 27 An earlier solution attempted under Wudi tried cutting off both the Jue and Hao Rivers midway, forcing them via the man-made Jiao River to travel west, where they would join up with the Feng; less water emptying into the Kunming Pond made it less likely that undue pressure would be put on the water pipes and underground water systems of the capital. But this "solution" came with an inadvertent disadvantage: less water emptied into Kunming Pond, so it grew smaller, when the city's need for clean water supplies was growing. For information, see Lü Zhuomin 1990, 163–74.
- 28 In Western Han, water-control measures were directed by the Nine Ministers, but in Eastern Han, the Sikong directly dealt with the commanderies and counties, which had their own water-control officials. See Tsuruma Kazuyuki 1980–81.
- 29 The sources dispute whether the name refers to its architect (named Zheng Guo) or is somehow connected with the state of Zheng (*Zheng guo*).
- 30 Wu Hui 1985, 53, in part based on *Shiji* 29.
- 31 *Hanshu* 29.1677–85, 1694–97, passim ("Treatise on Waterways").
- 32 Li Lingfu 2004, 152.
- 33 See Li Lingfu 2004, 75–83, for the three principal theories about the location of this canal. Li believes the main function of this canal was not irrigation; rather it was designed to turn marshland south of the capital into farmland (a much more difficult task). For this reason and this reason only, Li argues, the canal was often termed "ineffective" (p. 87).
- 34 It is not easy to convert *qing* into Anglo-American measurements; even Michael Loewe seems to find the text unclear on this point. See Peng Xi 1994; also Xu Xiangping 1991.
- 35 See Hu Wei (1633–1714 CE), *Yugong zhui zhi*, "Guanzhong zhuqu tu," entry no. 42; also Li Lingfu 2004, 111.
- 36 Li Lingfu 2004, 97, believes the White Canal is not just a portion of the Zheng Guo canal but a different line. Debates remain.
- 37 *Hanshu* 29.1685 ("Treatise on Waterways").
- 38 Ibid. claims that the White Canal, along with the Zheng Guo, together transported the food and water needed by a million people living in the capital region. Ni Kuan was a high official with jurisdiction over a large part of what I am calling the "greater metropolitan Chang'an region" (*Zuo neishi* at the time).
- 39 Pei and Lin 2010.
- 40 Li Lingfu 2013, 13–14, for the sake of completeness also mentions a Luo–Wei Transport Canal and yet another granary.
- 41 The location of this canal is hotly disputed. The Lingchi Canal should not be confused with the Ling Canal (Ling Qu) built by Qin Shihuang circa 219 BCE across the Southern Mountains,

which was a short canal (just under 5 km) cut to permit travel to the headwaters of a southern tributary of the Yangzi. Li Lingfu 2004, 104, insists that the course of the Lingchi Canal is south of the Wei River (not north), contra other scholars.

- 42 See Yao Hanyuan 1987, citing *Hanshu* and Song Minqiu's *Chang'an zhi [tu]*. This contradicts Huang Yaoneng 1978, 142. For problems concerning the accuracy of the *Shuijing zhu*, see Nylan 2010b.
- 43 An analysis is given in Pei and Lin 2010; cf. Huang Shengzhang 1959, for a modern commentary to the *Shuijing zhu*. The water-supply system (its canals) has long been ruined in the old Jianzhang Palace complex site, aside from two of the three mounds that were once in the river, which can still be seen. In 1957, investigators dubbed this entire area the "Old Canal" (Gu Qu), adding to the confusion.
- 44 For a recent report of excavations summarizing excavations of two bridges that spanned the Wei River, see *Hua shang bao*, May 26, 2012. Archaeologists originally identified the huge bridges as Chucheng Gate Bridge and Luocheng Bridge for the newspaper reporters, but they now call one of them Heng Bridge. Three main bridges spanned the Wei River, so far as we know. Work continues at the site. The full site report is expected as we go to press.
- 45 Because that part of the Wei River Plain near the Western Han capital is higher in the southeast and lower in the northwest, the slope of the plain itself facilitated water flow into the area of Han Chang'an. See Pei and Lin 2010, 209.
- 46 With the Yellow River and its tributaries, an additional problem always arose: silting up, which prevented navigation by large boats.
- 47 Bielenstein 1980, 43–47. These laborers were *zu* (conscript servicemen) who were detailed for the work as part of their statutory labor service, not recruited from people not on the tax registers (*liu min*) or from the ranks of the "unemployed" (if such a group existed in antiquity). The *liu min* were probably liable to punishment if they made themselves known to officials.
- 48 The *Shiji* and *Hanshu* agree that the Wei River was the source of the Transport Canal, but neither text explicitly states the precise location where the canal met the river. Two locations have been proposed, one somewhere northwest of the Western Han Chang'an capital, the second southwest of the capital, near Diaoyutai, on the south bank of the Wei. The latter is surely correct, based on the records from the *Jiu Tangshu*, *juan* 172, as both the eminent scholars Shi Nianhai and Chen Qiaoyi argued. See Shi Nianhai 1988, 80; and Chen Qiaoyi 2008, 250–51.
- 49 For details about the Bao–Xie (or Bao–Ye) Transport Canal, see Shi Nianhai 1988, 80; Li Lingfu 2013. One of the few Western Han inscriptions that survive concerns the Bao–Xie Road; the inscription is clearly dated to 63 CE. For the full text, see Nylan 2011a. But Tan Zhongyi 1967 makes the case that an earlier Bao–Xie road existed, which was extended in 63 CE.
- 50 Huang Shengzhang 1982, 6–41, esp. 6–25, on Han Chang'an.
- 51 The Cloaca Maxima, the obvious comparison, is nevertheless not necessarily apt because (a) that project took nearly seven centuries to complete; (b) it started life as an open-air canal a mere 100 meters in length, compared with the 6,500-meter-long Transport Canal, to take one example; and (c) for these reasons the Cloaca was composed, quite exceptionally for canals of its time in the Italian Peninsula, of monumental stone blocks, rather than being a simpler canal lined with clay or gravel, due to the danger of its sinking as it stretched across the huge (and unstable) landfill between the Capitoline and Palatine Hills. For the early history of the Cloaca Maxima, see Hopkins 2007. Until the fourth century CE, wastewater from Rome tended to be dumped directly into the Tiber River, which must have contributed to the ideal conditions for plague.
- 52 Xu Weimin 2011, 115. The water intake pipes are round, as opposed to five sided. At several excavation sites, the two sets of pipes (water intake and water outflow) appear to have been buried side by side in the same ditch.

- 53 Chai Yi, personal communication, June 13, 2012. See n. 51 above. Surprisingly few plagues are listed in the *Hanshu* “Wuxing zhi” on ominous events. No events are labeled *yi* (plague); three *bing* (illnesses) are said to have afflicted the people at large. See *Hanshu* 27B-zhong.1405, 27B-xia.1420, 27C-xia.1442. Some writers, such as Robert Hymes, have pointed out the difficulty of finding clear references to plagues and epidemics even in the sources of Yuan and Ming, despite considerable circumstantial evidence that they happened then. So we appear to have a problem with our sources, given that most religious cults (including that dedicated to the Queen Mother) were healing cults. For tea drinking as standard among members of the governing elite, at least in the capital region, see Wang Bao’s famous “contract,” trans. Wilbur 1943, 385. I thank Rafe de Crespigny for reminding me about boiling water for tea.
- 54 *Hanshu* 24A.1141.
- 55 Similarly, the standard histories plainly show that imperial gifts comprised a high percentage of the highest-ranking official’s income. A minister ranked at “fully 2,000 bushels” could be awarded gifts in cash and silk amounting to 115,000 coins. Emperors often gave land gifts of several hundred *mu* or more to their favorites; even gifts of 1,000 units/catties of gold were not unknown.
- 56 Ma Zhenglin 1979, 1986.
- 57 The classic work on Han agriculture is Hsu Cho-yun 1980.
- 58 Ding Bangyou 2009, esp. 74–78, 132–36, 162–89, provides a helpful summary of excavated sources on food, aside from several early recipe books that are now available in fragments, although its focus is on pricing. For an earlier, classic attempt to discuss commodity prices, especially of food, see Miyazaki Ichisada 1956, which refers to both excavated and received documents; cf. Hu Pingsheng and Zhang Defang 2001. On *doufu* production, see Shinoda Osamu 1978; and Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 2010, 107ff.
- 59 See Wang Fengjun 2011, 55. For the Juyan and Dunhuang documents, see Loewe 1967, MD 8, 9, and 10 and the table on p. 69.
- 60 Yü Ying-shih 1979, 71; cf. Hou Yongjian 1987 and Huang Zhanyue 1982; Kim 2004. Cui Shi’s *Zhenglun* (comp. ca. 150 CE) discusses food consumption and expenditures for officials who earned 200 bushels of unhusked grain per month, along with 2,000 coins. For that text, see *Quan Han wen*, vol. 1, 46.9.
- 61 This figure is calculated at a daily rate of 6 *sheng*, more or less. The Han bushel (pronounced *shi* or *dan*) was just under 20 liters. See Lin Ganquan 2006, cited in Hou Yongjian 2011, 300. *Hanshu* 24A.1556 reckons, “For grain, a person consumes one and a half bushels per month.” See also Hou Yongjian 2011, 302–3 (chart), compiled for the late Zhanguo to late Western Han period, supplying the land-to-people ratio, calculated in *shijin* (market kilograms), on the basis of Wu Hui 1985, 195. Another useful source is Yu Fengjun 2005. By contrast, Zhu Shiguang 2000, 38, emphasizes that there was sufficient food in Guanzhong to feed both the officials and ordinary people.
- 62 These figures are usually based on anecdotal evidence from the standard histories and a few random archaeological finds—hardly enough evidence to inspire confidence.
- 63 *Shiji* 30.1418, 1436, 1441.
- 64 *Hanshu* 24A.1125 says, “For food, a person consumes one and a half bushels per month [of grain].” Readers should note first that Zhou Zhenhe 1987 shows that the tax registers ascribed to 2 CE are based on Chengdi’s reign; also that Hsu Cho-yun 1980, *passim*, reckoned on a substantial increase to the population of the Western Han empire. If Hsu is right, then circa 150 BCE the population would have been about half of the figures that we have for 1–2 CE (or 26 BCE). That would certainly change these figures for reigns other than Chengdi’s own.
- 65 See *Shiji* 97.2695, and the Zhang Shoujie commentary to the passage, which says, “The Ao Granary was built atop Ao Mountain; hence its name.” The Honggou Canal, or “Vast Canal,”

(not Wild Goose Canal, contra Needham) connected Dingtao, an economic center in pre-imperial times, with the Qin capital at Xianyang. Built in 360 BCE, the Honggou Canal was the first man-made canal to connect the Yellow and Huai Rivers. During Qin, the grain imported from the “area east of the passes” was stored at the Ao Granary complex, before being released to Xianyang. But both the textual and archaeological sources fail to show that by Western Han times, the Honggou Canal was much used as a major transport route: first, because of the changed location of the capital; and second, because severe flooding on the Yellow River had silted up the Honggou. See Shi Nianhai 1988, 87.

- 66 Zhang Xiaodong 2010, 337–38.
- 67 Contrast He Qinggu 2005, 6.346–47, with Wang Shejiao 1998, 108; and 2008, 189. See also *Kuodi zhi*, *juan* 1, 11, citing Song Minqiu’s *Chang’an zhi [tu]*, *juan* 12, which places the granary in Chang’an county during Tang. Lü Dafang’s “Chang’an Map” (“Chang’an tu,” comp. 1080 CE) overlays Han and Tang Chang’an and shows a Great Granary in the southeast corner; for the fragments from this, see Map I.02b. See Ma Hsien-hsing 1976, appended fig. 1. (I am unclear how this granary relates to the one later named Ever-Full Granary in 4 BCE, under Wang Mang.) For this, see Dubs 1938–55, 3:191; *Hanshu* 99A.4069; Wang Xianqian 1900/1955 (1959 repr.), 99A.18b. Judging from the primary sources, Wang Mang was proposing a huge new granary that would be kept constantly full.
- 68 See He Qinggu 1995/2006, 6.408; *Kaogu*, no. 4 (1973): 3–6. *Hanshu* 19A.731 and 21A.968 speak of Great Granary officials, from at least Wudi’s reign onward.
- 69 See *Hanshu* 99C.4189n4, with further comments in *Hanshu buzhu* 99C.25b. The site is only 9 kilometers away from Huayin (east of the boundary wall of the pre-unification state of Wei).
- 70 Roof tile ends at the site bear inscriptions tentatively rendered as Hua Cang (i.e., Hua Granary) and *Yuhua wuji* and *Yuhua xiangyi*. Liu Tseng-kuei of the Academia Sinica (Taiwan), however, disputes the local archaeologists’ reading of the roof tile end inscriptions of “Hua” (personal communication, April 2011). But the 1990 excavation report, *Xi Han jingshi cang*, supplies a second reason for equating the Capital and Hua Granaries: the Capital Granary complex was located in Huayin county. For the original site reports, see *Kaogu yu wenwu* 1982, no. 6: 20–28, 29–33.
- 71 The sources say this is “south of Kunming Pond; west of the city and north of the Wei River, near the Stone Dike in the Xiliu Plain”; alternately, they say “southwest of Xianyang county by 20 *li*,” at the juncture of the Wei River (going east) and the Feng River in the Duanyin Mountains.”
- 72 See He Qinggu 1995/2006, 6.408–9, which notes that the discovery of this granary was hailed in Jing Kuangsheng et al. 1986, 104. For the location as “east of Slender Willow,” see *Shaanxi tongzhi*, *juan* 73, cited in e-SKQS.
- 73 For site reports, see Yao Shengmin 1980; cf. Zheng Hongchun and Yao Shengmin 1980.
- 74 See Tian Yaqi et al. 2005 for the original report; cf. *Zhongguo zhongyao kaogu faxian* 2005. The principle site report for this excavated granary, located 15 kilometers southwest of the present-day Fengxiang county seat, in Changqing town, appears in English: Tian Yaqi et al. 2006. The lead excavator, Tian Yaqi, reported this to me in June 2012.
- 75 Based on Tian Yaqi et al. 2006. Li Lingfu 2013 mentions yet another granary, but it was farther away from the capital.
- 76 Tian Yaqi et al. 2006, 54.
- 77 Another granary at some distance from the capital, near the Hangu Pass and the Yellow River, has been located in present-day Xin’an. See *Zhongguo kaogu xue*, *Qin Han juan* 2010, 220–23.
- 78 *Hanshu* 8.268, 9.285, 24A.1141. *Hou Hanshu* 39.1305 offers further analysis, as does Wang Fuzhi’s (1619–1692 CE) *Du Tongjian lun* 4.55–56, 60.
- 79 Tsuruma Kazuyuki 1980–81 states that from the time of Yuandi and Chengdi, village society was increasingly controlled by local strongmen, who felt free to interfere with government.

- Tsuruma's hypothesis has been widely adopted; see Lai Ming-chiu 1995, 27n86. *Hanshu* 24B.1183 claims that "at the end [of Western Han], many officials in the commanderies and counties were involved in financial fiddling, and so their offices were empty." Zhang Xiaofeng 2007, 167, complains, with some justice, that Yuandi from 38 to 34 BCE neglected his administration; instead Yuandi, trained in the *qin* and *se* (lute and zither), in drum and wind instruments (especially the *xiao*), and in singing, was preoccupied with musical matters. Cf. *Hanshu* 82.3376, 93.3726; also Loewe 2012–13, 373.
- 80 *Shuoyuan* 7.39 advises land distribution among the people, as well as distributions of food.
- 81 See *Hanshu* 85.3472.
- 82 See Liu Tseng-kuei's chapter in this volume.
- 83 See Elvin 1973, 27. Water transport was always much cheaper than land transport. According to *Shiji* 129 and *Shuijing zhu*, the Yellow and Wei Rivers attracted merchants. The main commodities transported over long distances, aside from supplies for the military, were salt, iron, silk, lacquer, and wood. Given the expense involved in transport, that same First Emperor mandated that standards be used, not only for weights and measures of grain, but also for axle lengths, so that the empire's carts and carriages could race along the ruts.
- 84 A final intriguing feature of roads as an ideal organizing tool of classical-era society cannot go unnoticed: in theory, males were to walk on the right side of the road, females to the left. Had this rule been enforced, roadways would have reinforced strict gender constructions in public places. However, few historians today believe that this rule was observed; they judge it nearly impossible for imperial officials, even those operating at the local level, to mandate significant forms of gender segregation in times of rule by powerful women at court and in private life, because many women were designated heads or effective heads of households of every status.
- 85 Martin Kern estimates that only about 1 of 1,000 Han *fu* survive today, though this was the major poetic form of the day (personal communication, August 2012). For other losses, consult Dudbridge 2000; Drège 1991. A second problem is that the editions we hold in our hands today have been heavily edited by centuries of well-meaning activist editors. See Kalinowski 2005; Nylan 2008a.
- 86 For Eastern Han (25–220 CE), a total of nineteen stone inscriptions commemorate the construction of roads and bridges; none, so far as I know, mentions road deities. Either the Chinese, who now regard themselves as a people or race uniquely in thrall to the written word, were long ago not much concerned with producing inscriptions for the wider viewing public, or they have shown remarkable energy in destroying inscribed memorial sites.
- 87 For example, Bagley 2001, 40, 212, 217, 311. Elvin 1973, chap. 1, points to three main factors that allow for the creation and destruction of empires: (1) size of the political unit; (2) productivity of its economy; and (3) the proportion of total output that has to be spent on defense and administration. "Size" (prior to modern times) refers mainly to the *burden* defined in terms of time and cost of communications over vast distances.
- 88 See *Shiji* 117.3046–47 for a summary of both the Qin and Han efforts to build roads prior to setting up administrative units.
- 89 For discussion of forced migrations as one part of the four-part plan to secure the agricultural resources necessary for a stable empire, see Wang Zhenduo 1989, chap. 5, esp. 84–89. For the forced migrations of the nobility and the rich, see Xu Tianlin 1972, chap. 49, esp. 499; Wang Zijin 1994, chap. 13; Swann 1950, 249, citing *Hanshu* 24B/7a.
- 90 See, for example, *Hanshu* 6.195, 25B.1242, 64A.3761.
- 91 Tan Zhongyi 1967, map follows p. 95. For the disputes over Huizong, see *ibid.*, 67.
- 92 According to *Yonglu*, *juan* 6, the Song study of the capital, the Tong Pass was built during Tang. But the name Zitong is well documented for late Western Han. From the Chunqiu era, this pass was more commonly known as Peach Grove Border. Cf. Wang Yuqing 1961.

- 93 *Shiji* 69.2253. An advisor to would-be centralizers specifically mentions the prestige and strategic advantages to be gained by states whose roads allow carts to go two abreast and horsemen to ride in pairs (*ibid.*, 2258). Cf. *Huainanzi*, vol. 2, 586. Roads and maps are major topics in the *Guanzi* as well, a lengthy text translated by Rickett 1985–98, 1:229 (*juan* 5, sec. 58.13).
- 94 Lewis 2006, 55, gives the figure of 4,250 miles, which Lewis apparently took from Bodde's essay in *CHOC*, p. 61, for the Qin's imperial highways, though whether this includes all the roads built by the Qin state during the period before unification in 221 BCE is not clear. Lewis also says that the mileage for Han roads was greater, but he fails to give precise figures. Gibbon's estimate for the length of the Roman road system was 3,740 miles (ca. 150 CE).
- 95 Next to some *chidao* were also built *yongdao* (palisaded roads), which were reserved for the emperor and his relatives. For further information, see Chen Zhi 1982, 15–18.
- 96 *Shuihudi*, sec. D159, makes it perfectly clear that kingdoms were more like “outer vassal states” than commanderies and counties, according to the laws. Cf. *Shuihudi*, sec. D183–84. However, a word of warning: The *Shuihudi* statutes date from Qin in 217 BCE and they very likely originated before the empire, so they may have no relevance to the kingdoms of Western Han.
- 97 All criminal activities committed “within the passes” received stiffer sentences if those activities then extended beyond the passes. See *Shuihudi*, sec. D118.
- 98 Safe spaces, including forts, were created to protect and control the key nodes of trade, to limit indigenous peoples' direct access to Chinese and foreign markets (thereby intentionally impoverishing them). A memorial about the Xiongnu (dated to 33 BCE) advised the emperor to quit the border passes but to retain within the central states the *guan liang* (passes and checks at city gates) in order to regulate the nobility. See *Hanshu* 94B.3803; *Biographical Dictionary*, 159 (for Hou Ying).
- 99 As seen below, this display culture precluded the sharp distinctions between the public and private to which moderns were accustomed, if not those between official and unofficial business.
- 100 Lü Simian 1947/1962, 587–94. Sedan chairs hitched to horses or oxen were another dignified possibility where roads were not broad enough to admit carriages. The more impoverished and low-ranked probably rode oxen, judging from anecdotes, if they were not forced to walk. For an overview of carriages as markers of status and virtue in the sumptuary regulations, see Xu Tianlin 1972, chap. 9. That chapter includes the major references in the standard histories to tallies, seals, passports, and so forth (the other paraphernalia of the government-controlled roads).
- 101 See Thote 1999; Jiang Shaoyuan 1935. The latter tries to retrieve the deeper apotropaic significance of such quotidian objects.
- 102 See *Hanshu* 24B, trans. Swann 1950, 308.
- 103 *Shuihudi*, sec. A64.
- 104 *Shuihudi*, sec. G.
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 See, for example, *Shuihudi*, secs. A68, D18, E10. Rations for horses and cattle are mentioned in *Shuihudi*, secs. A5, A37, A75. Rations for messengers are specified in *Shuihudi*, sec. A93. Males assigned to hard labor (a category including construction work, escorting prisoners, or being posted to a rest house for the courier service) received rations of half a bushel of grain in the morning and one-third at night, whereas those who stayed put, like the females engaged in hard labor, were given only one-third of a bushel at the two meals of the day. *Shuihudi*, sec. A15–18, also Hulsewé 1985, 14–15, and 32n2. In these same *Shuihudi* laws, a bushel of grain is reckoned to be worth 30 bronze cash. See *Shuihudi*, sec. A66.

NB: There are numerous references in the early sources, however, to carts pulled by humans, either because they were more reliable than oxen and horses or because they represented the safest way, especially in mountainous regions on the frontiers. Sedan chairs were also employed

- in such circumstances, as well as for the sick. Horses were graded into three sorts: those with the longest limbs were used for carriages of a certain type; those with limbs of middling length, for the “highways”; and those with the shortest, for transport. The Han continued the old Qin transport system.
- 107 Several anecdotes from Han discuss the government guesthouses provided at the commandery and county levels, perhaps the most famous being that recorded in *Fengsu tongyi* 9/10a-b.
- 108 *Shuihudi*, sec. C21. Markets were held at many, if not all, the passes, especially at the frontiers, as we know from commentaries to the standard histories. For two examples, see Wang Xian-qian 1900/1955, 94A/15b, 95/8a.
- 109 *Shuihudi*, sec. A10; cf. sec. A12, 15, 16, for rations for hard-labor convicts engaged in government business.
- 110 For details, see Lü Simian 1962, 602–7; for the figure of 600 *li*, see *ibid.* 606. The transportation system included rest houses where travelers could eat and sleep, in addition to relay buildings and post stations where messengers exchanged exhausted horses for fresh ones. *Shuihudi* documents show that Qin set up checkpoints along the roads where travelers had to pay a tax and show passports in order to continue. Later estimates from Ming give 30–40 kilometers per day as an average for the regular post, roughly the same speed as in Han times.
- 111 The *Juyan* slips talk of night journeys (e.g., strips 285.5, 163.5); see Wang Zijin 1994, 263.
- 112 *Shuihudi*, sec. E4, 5. Prior to the *Shuihudi* and Zhangjiashan, it was assumed that civil law did not exist in China; that notion is manifestly untrue, as recent doctoral work by Zhang Zhao-yang demonstrates. Zhang’s first analysis will soon appear in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. For more information on postal and relay services, see Loewe 2006, 79–81, 109–110.
- 113 *Shuihudi*, sec. A1.
- 114 *Shuihudi*, sec. A36.
- 115 Officials who did not use the carriages that marked their ranks were punished, as noted in this anecdote about Wei Xuancheng: Wei was accused of riding one rainy day on horseback, rather than in a carriage; he was demoted to *guan nei hou*. Nobles were not to demean their positions by foregoing the use of carriages. See *Biographical Dictionary*, 579–80.
- 116 *Shuihudi*, sec. A37.
- 117 *Shuihudi*, secs. A74–76. Apparently, according to the preface to the Wei Statutes, sometime in Eastern Han (25–220 CE) the imperial government, while maintaining the system of relay stations, decided *not* to maintain the old system of “public carriages and horses.” Unfortunately, the wording of the preface is none too clear on the scope and date of the change(s).
- 118 *Shuihudi*, sec. A48. Permission was granted to repair or replace wheels, as needed, for the courier service and the carriages of high government officials. See *ibid.*
- 119 See, for example, *Shuihudi*, sec. A73, which mentions four reasons for damage: “if the cart was neglected, or the cart’s shafts become crooked; if the cart was left uncovered, or if its hood or canopy is broken or torn.”
- 120 *Shuihudi*, secs. D138–39, E10.
- 121 Were there time and space enough in this volume, this chapter could examine the range of issues and changing regulations relating to the government pastures for horses and oxen.
- 122 *Shuihudi*, sec. C17.
- 123 For example, the minister Sang Hongyang (152–80 BCE) reputedly set up such a for-profit service. When Wang Wenshu was Governor of Henei, the commandery officials used altogether fifty private horses for relay services run by the big families in the commandery, going from Henei to Henan to Chang’an; much later in his career he chose suicide rather than face charges of corruption (ca. 104 BCE). See *Hanshu* 90.3656; *Biographical Dictionary*, 554–55. Nor did merchant status disqualify a man from office (as it would have in late imperial China). The famous official Diwu Lun was once engaged in the transport business; he spent most of his

career under Eastern Han, attaining high office in 75 CE. See *ibid.*, 65–66; *Hou Hanshu* 41.1376. Already by Zhanguo times (475–222 BCE), the transport business was important. One description, recorded in *Zhanguoce*, 22/5b, says that merchants were as busy as troops, traveling night and day “without stopping,” and that they also used as many draft animals as the troops.

4

Mural Tombs in Late Western Han Chang'an

Arlen Lian 練春海

THE MOST UP-TO-DATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS SUGGEST THAT TOMBS with painted murals first appeared during the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE–6 CE). Only one mural tomb in the Mangdang Mountains, some 250 kilometers east from Luoyang, whose occupant was one of the queens of Liang, survives from the first century of Han rule.¹ Judging from the remaining archaeological evidence at our disposal, the mural tombs began to be more prevalent during the second century of Western Han rule, appearing first around Luoyang and then just outside the capital city walls at Chang'an.² All these mural tombs from Luoyang and Chang'an are mid- to large-sized vertical pit tombs made of brick. Typically, the paintings on their walls and ceilings are executed in bright mineral colors. (Only during the first century CE, in Eastern Han, did the fashion for mural tombs spread across the rest of the empire.)³

To date, but four late Western Han mural tombs in the vicinity of the old site of Western Han Chang'an have been reported officially. All four mural tombs are situated outside the present-day ruins of the perimeter city walls⁴ and concentrated in the southeast corner of modern Xi'an city, not far from Xuandi's (r. 74–48 BCE) mausoleum complex at Duling—a location whose significance will become clear below. The four mural tombs are located relatively close together, with the Ligong and Jiaotong Universities' tomb sites roughly 3.5 kilometers from the two tombs at Qujiangchi (Map 4.1); they are M1 at Qujiangchi, excavated in 1985; Jiaotong University, excavated in 1987; Ligong University, excavated in 2004; and Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park (Cuizhu Yuan; hereafter Kingfisher Park), also in Qujiang district, excavated in 2008. Prelimi-



FIG. 4.01 Mural from tomb in Dingbian, Shaanxi. The mural tombs from northern Shaanxi Province, at no small distance from Chang'an, probably reflect a different local culture from that prevailing in late Western Han Chang'an. The images depict the apotheosis of the deceased couple, like Han mural tombs in Luoyang; they moreover place little emphasis on the pleasurable rounds of activities available to the capital residents. Strange creatures everywhere seem to indicate a paradise realm. Finally, the color palette is quite distinctive. Reproduced with permission from *Wenwu*, no. 7 (2010): colorplate cover.

without detailing the content, style, and date of the fragments purportedly found there. Unconfirmed media reports meanwhile allege that murals have been found in one of the secondary tombs associated with Zhang Anshi's (d. 62 BCE) family cemetery near Xi'an, but no formal excavation report confirms these unofficial accounts.⁹

Equally unfortunately, the very recent excavations of several colorful mural tombs dated to the Wang Mang era are not germane to the subject under consideration here, for two main reasons. First, this chapter discusses mural tombs found in the vicinity of the Western Han capital of Chang'an; but the distance from Chang'an to Dingbian and Jingbian (Fig. 4.01), the sites of those mural tombs, exceeds the distance from Chang'an to Luoyang. Second, the mural tombs in the Chang'an area almost certainly housed highly placed (if non-noble) persons; whereas the Wang Mang-era mural tombs are situated in an old frontier zone, where people of all ranks and occupations congregated, including general officers, immigrants to the frontier colonies, and rebel soldiers from Xiongnu groups. Thus the mural tombs from Luoyang, a second great city boasting a fine heritage and considerable wealth, seem more comparable to the Chang'an mural tombs than do the northern Shaanxi Province mural tombs. Indeed, there are many similarities between the artistic traditions in Chang'an and Luoyang. Admittedly the Luoyang finds are not the newest we have, but it is hard to believe that more discoveries will not be found in the vicinity of old Chang'an.

The Four Mural Tombs from Old Chang'an

Built along an east–west axis, M1 at Qujiangchi represents a complex some 28.9 meters long, which consists of a stepped access ramp 15.8 meters long, a main burial chamber,

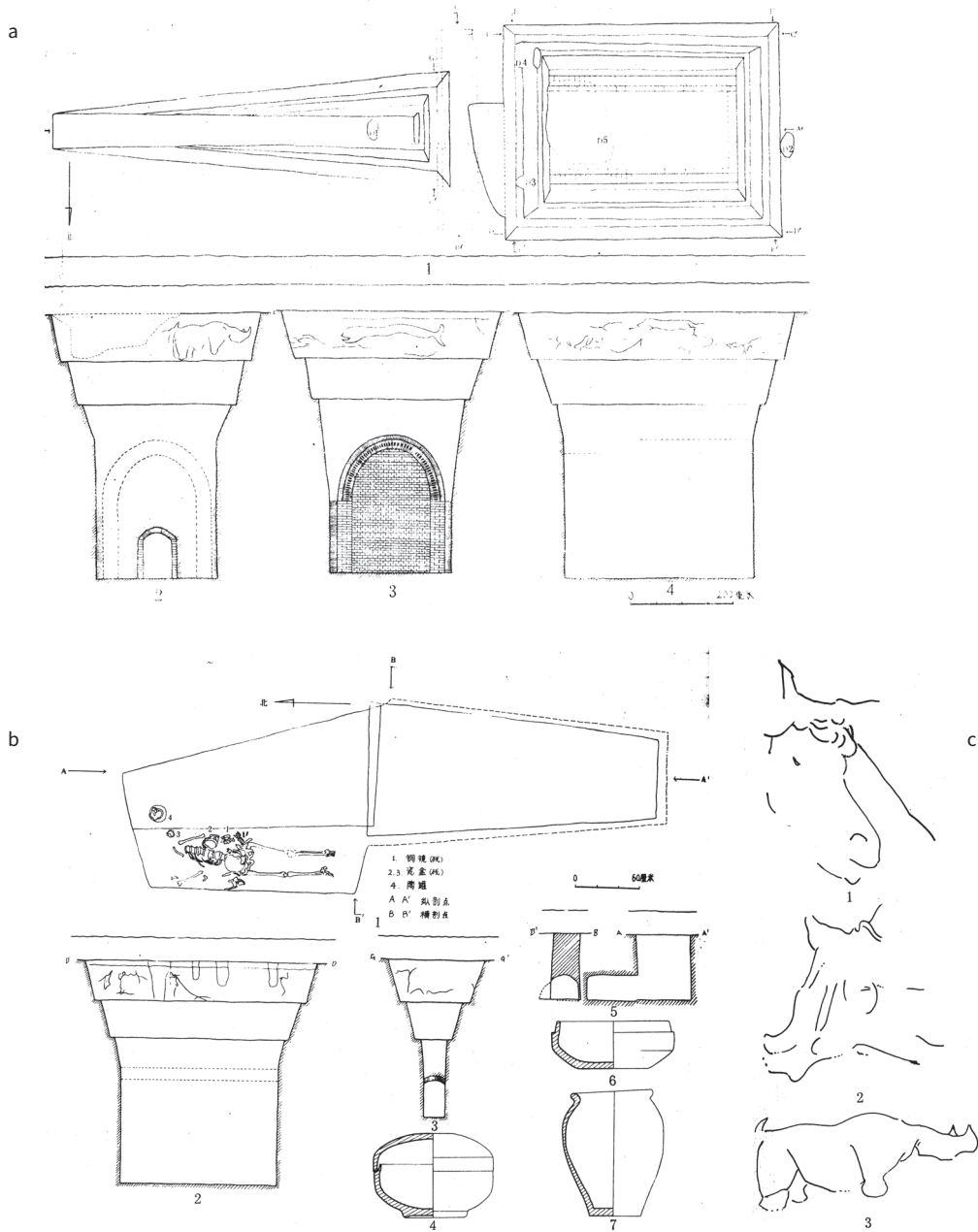


FIG. 4.02 (a and b) Line drawings of M1 and M2 at Qujiangchi. The top section of a shows a plan view of M1 (with the north pointing to the bottom of the page); the top section of b shows a plan view of M2 (with the north pointing to the left of the page). The numbers 2, 3, and 4 in the lower sections of a show cross-sections bearing murals of the eastern, western, and the southern walls of M1, respectively; the number 2 in the lower section of b shows a cross-section of the northern wall of M1, also with a mural. (c) Sketches of animals depicted on the murals at Qujiangchi M1. The top is a detail of a horse (northern wall); in the middle, a detail of an ox (southern wall); and at the bottom, a rhinoceros (eastern wall). Images reproduced with permission from Xu and Zhang 1987, figs. 1–3.

and two side chambers connected by a 5.9-meter corridor (Figs. 4.02a–c).¹⁰ The sloping access ramp connects with the east side of the tomb at a depth of 11.55 meters below the present ground level. Seen from the access ramp, the square burial chamber appears to be a vaulted brick tomb, with the coffin sitting within a tomb chamber whose sides flair outward near ground level. Within the tomb, the walls of the main burial chamber (7.4 m by 4.15 m, and 4.9 m high) were originally faced entirely with hard-fired greenish-gray bricks;¹¹ grave robbers have stolen nearly all these bricks. At the time of excavation, M1 at Qujiangchi was utterly devoid of grave goods in the main burial chamber, corridor, and side chambers; nor did excavators find in the main burial chamber any inner wooden coffins (*guan*), outer coffins, or skeletal remains. Apparently one side chamber may have contained some skeletal remains of a child at the time of excavation, but if so, those remains were inadvertently destroyed by the locals.¹² No fewer than five separate entry holes had been dug into the tomb, presumably at different times; three of those holes came through the vaulted ceiling.

At Qujiangchi, images of large animals (mostly herbivores) are outlined in white directly onto the bare earthen walls above the lowest register of both the northern and southern walls of the tomb chamber; such images also appear on the western wall of the stepped access ramp leading into the tomb chamber.¹³ (No murals appear in the single corridor wedged between the access ramp and the tomb itself.)¹⁴ The mural painter(s) made little attempt to depict the relative sizes of the animals realistically (see Fig. 4.02c). The technique used to draw the animals was simple, and the white powder used to outline the animal forms—think of a chalk outline—was not conducive to fine detail.

The Jiaotong University tomb complex, built on a north–south axis, includes a sloping tomb access ramp 12.5 meters long (only the floor of which remains), a main burial chamber, and side chambers to the east and west. The whole tomb complex measures some 17.43 meters long. The access ramp meets the south side of the tomb at a 30-degree angle. Uniquely among the mural tombs in the Chang'an suburbs, the Jiaotong University tomb complex includes no corridors (*yongdao*) connecting the various components of the site, but this midsize brick tomb, whose main burial chamber measures 4.55 by 1.83 meters (E–W), has walls 2.25 meters high. The tomb is relatively well preserved, though looting almost certainly accounts for the relative paucity of burial goods found within the tomb proper.¹⁵ A gigantic hole made by grave robbers in the midsection of the floor of the tomb access ramp allowed water to seep into the entire tomb, causing extensive damage. Still, some sixty-six grave goods remained in the tomb, including bronze and iron vessels, jades, and cowries, in addition to 216 bronze coins. Excavators paid particular attention to a model of a horse-drawn carriage, bronze models of lances and crossbows, and eight jade plugs designed to block the orifices of the dead.¹⁶ In addition, bone fragments were found in the main burial chamber, mixed with rotted wooden fragments, indicating the location of the tomb occupant's coffin.¹⁷



FIG. 4.03 Detail of mural on ceiling of the tomb at Jiaotong University, representing the sun, late Western Han. Reproduced with permission from Cheng Linquan 1991, fig. 1.

Colored paintings fill the walls and ceiling of the burial chamber at Jiaotong University (Fig. 4.03). The murals can be divided into two sections: the first composed of the lower half of the rear northern wall together with the eastern, western, and southern walls; the second composed of the ceiling plus the upper register of the back wall. The Twenty-Eight Constellations and the Four Directional Animals are painted on the tomb ceiling. The main subject of the upper register of the rear wall is a man practicing the breathing exercises intended to promote longevity. The lower-register murals are made up of swirling cloud volutes, which form the background for fantastic flying birds and racing beasts.¹⁸ The two halves of the decorative program are separated by a lattice-like ornamental band decorated with a flower pattern. (Murals once flanked the door to the main burial chamber as well, but they sustained

damage early on, with the result that today's visitors can only see some fragments of paint on the faces of bricks that have fallen down there.) In preparation for mural painting, artisans applied a thick gummy substance to the brick facing on the tomb walls, to form a base like gesso. Over this base a white powder was then applied, followed by a light wash of reddish brown.¹⁹ After this preparation, bright mineral colors were used for the designs on the walls and ceiling. The skill with which the mural painting was executed, not to mention the variety of the painting tools and materials employed, all suggests the work of a highly mature professional in command of a variety of techniques.²⁰

By report, the large vertical pit tomb complex at Ligong University, measuring 38.3 meters in length, once had a tumulus built over it, but that tumulus was leveled in the 1960s or 1970s (Fig. 4.04). Laid out in the shape of the Chinese character *jia* 甲, the brick-lined complex consists of an access ramp, the main burial chamber, two side chambers (east and west of the main chamber), and a short corridor only 0.6 meter long. (The excavation map for the site does not show any such corridor, but the text of the report mentions a small corridor located between the access ramp and the main



FIG. 4.04 Three-dimensional image of the main chamber of M1 at Ligong University. Image generated by Maurizio Forte, University of California, Merced.

burial chamber.) This complex is oriented almost due south, being off a mere 5 degrees to the west.²¹ The access ramp is 27.5 meters long and resembles a ladder; it leads to the south side of the burial chamber, which measures 4.6 by 2.08 meters. The walls of the burial chamber are 2.1 meters high. The two side chambers are smaller scale, the eastern one measuring 0.9 by 1.25 meters; the western, 0.96 by 3.2 meters. The corridor is sealed with bricks. Grave robbers entered the tomb through two tunnels, dug north and south of the burial pit. These tunnels heavily damaged both the eastern side chamber and the main burial chamber, but the western side chamber survives intact. A single wooden coffin was put in the northeast part of the main burial chamber, but there is no evidence of a corpse or skeletal remains. Meanwhile, the looters left a considerable number of grave goods behind: some 142 pieces of pottery, bronze, iron, lead, and jade were found, along with 142 bronze coins.²² The archaeologists' attention was especially drawn to a pair of jade eye covers, a single jade mouth stopper, and a jade anus plug found in the main burial chamber, as well as to two models of a horse-drawn carriage made of lacquered wood discovered in the western side chamber.

The mural paintings at Ligong are in excellent condition, despite the damage sustained to the tomb. They cover all four walls and the domed ceiling of the main burial chamber (Figs. 4.05a–d). The murals depict a fantastic immortal sprouting wings and also several scenes of an idealized life for men and women of high status, with banquets, musical performances, and hunts.²³ In preparation for these mural paintings, a

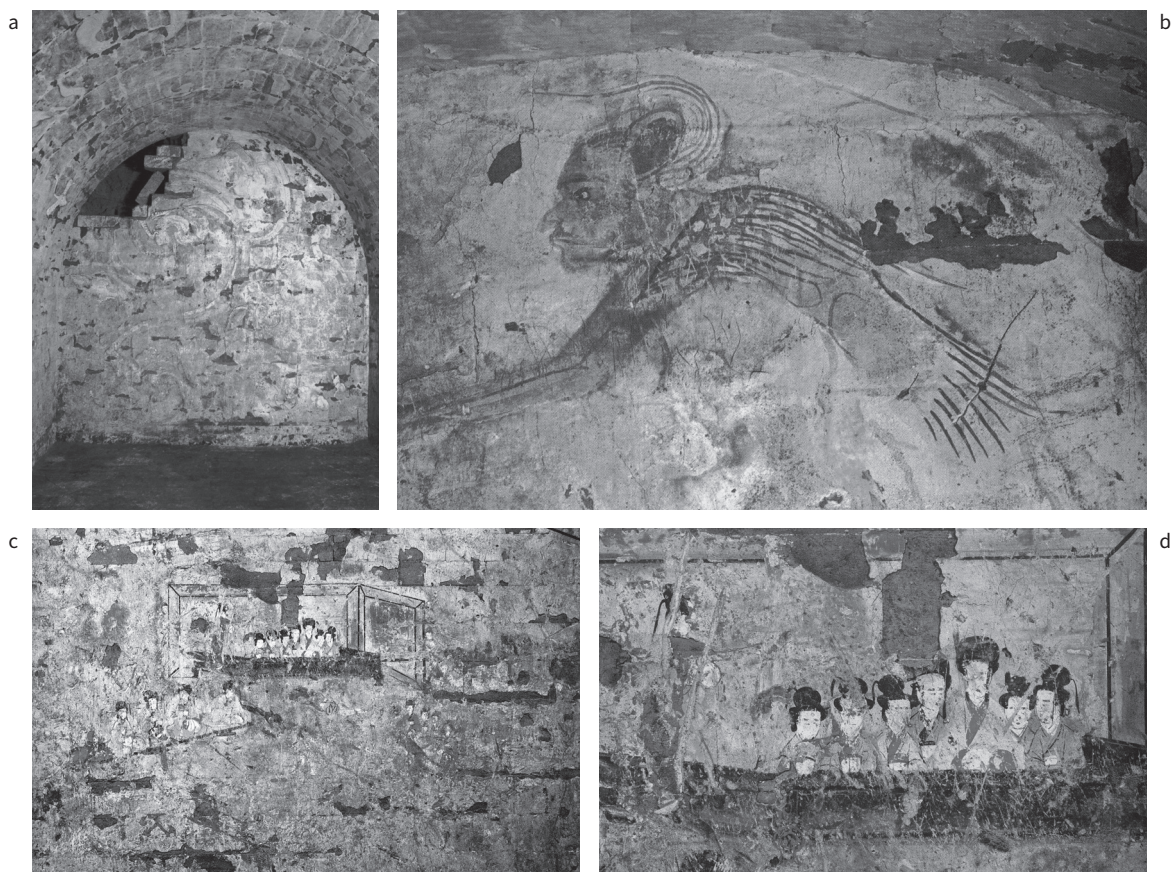


FIG. 4.05 Four images from M1 at Ligong University: (a) The northern wall of the tomb chamber. (b) A feathered immortal on the northern wall. (c) Banquet scene on the western wall. (d) Detail of western wall banquet scene showing human figures. These images from *Wenwu*, no. 5 (2006): figs. 41, 42, 45, and 46 are reprinted with permission from Wenwu chubanshe.

white glossy paste was first applied to the walls and ceiling; black outlines were then painted directly on this base and those outlines were filled in with bright mineral colors. On the murals, we can still see quite a few black drafting lines, from the original sketches or from later emendations. Again, the sensitivity and skill shown in rendering the facial expressions bespeak highly skilled craftsmen.

At Kingfisher Park, the large brick complex measuring 32 meters long consists of a sloping access ramp (19.8 m long) leading into the main burial chamber, some 8.1 meters below ground level today, plus two side chambers connected by a corridor 6.4 meters long.²⁴ Though the tomb is oriented along a north-south axis, its entrance ramp connects to the north side of the tomb chamber, giving the tomb a northeastern orientation. No human remains were found in the main burial chamber, which measures 5.8 by 3.15 meters, with walls 3.5 meters high. At the time of excavation, the upper parts

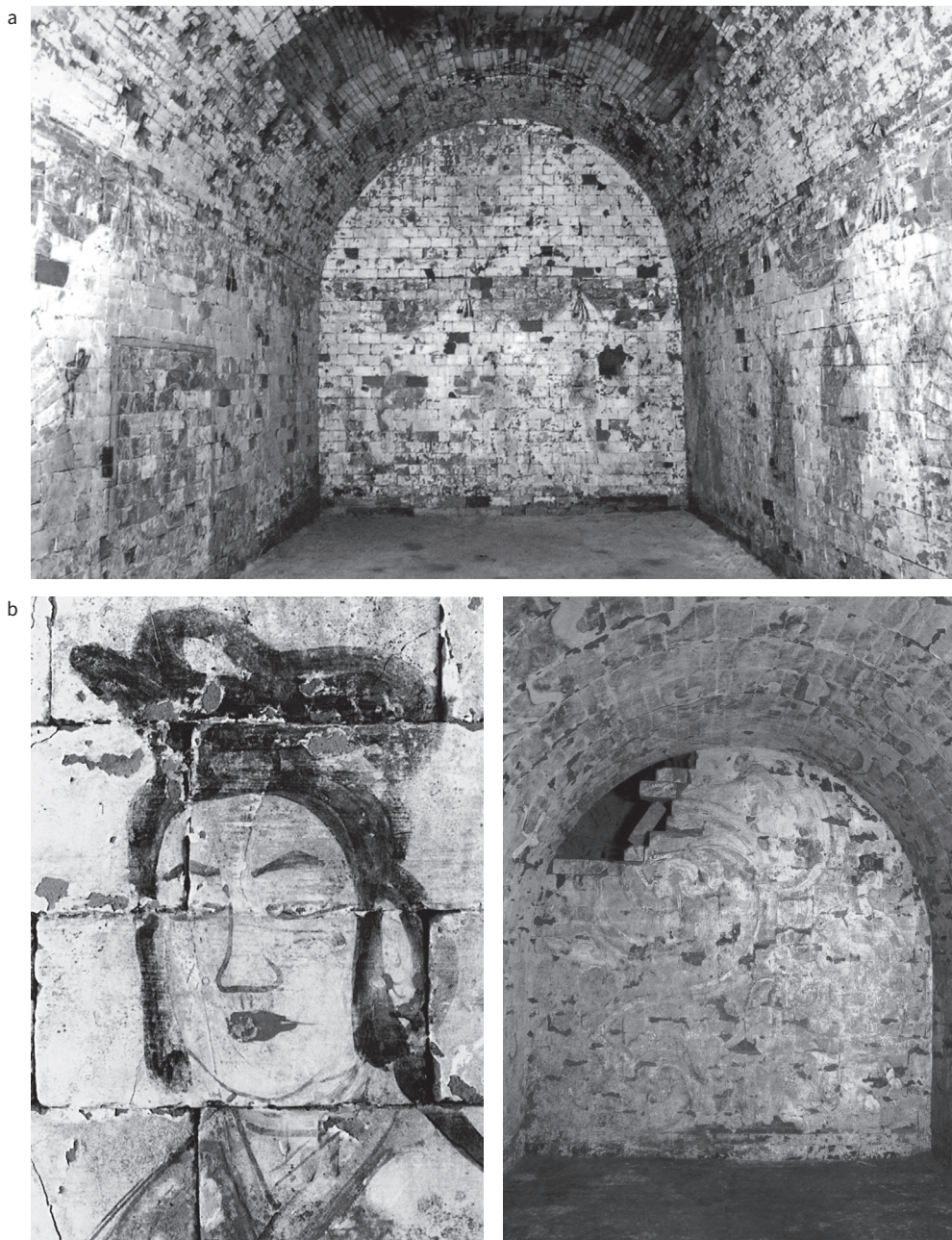


FIG. 4.06 Images from the tomb at Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park, late Western Han: (a) Interior of the main chamber, looking from the south toward the north. (b) A woman's head on the eastern wall. (c) Figure of a man on the southern wall. These images are drawn from *Wenwu*, no. 1 (2010): figs. 1, 15, and 16 and reprinted with permission from Wenwu chubanshe.

of the tomb were already badly decayed, and there was evidence of grave robbery in the northern part of the corridor. Still, fifty-three individual grave goods remained at the tomb site at the time of excavation, including pottery, jades, bronzes, and cowrie shells. The main burial chamber alone yielded thirty-odd items, including a jade tiger, jade pig, jade humans, jade disks and half disks, jade clothing ornaments, and fourteen bronze coins. (Because the tomb was severely looted, no other burial goods were found.)

At Kingfisher Park the inside surfaces of the walls of the main burial chamber are completely covered with brightly painted murals whose mineral colors are still fresh (Fig. 4.06a–c). Scenes of the starry heavens are on the tomb ceiling. The walls show mainly idealized scenes of a high-status life, with banquet and hunting scenes predominant. (Such scenes are often mistakenly described as “daily life” or “genre” scenes.)²⁵ The banquet and hunting scenes are separated by a wide, heavy drapery or curtain of dark brown, as if to emphasize the distinction between inside and outside the home.²⁶ As with the other mural tombs, these Kingfisher Park murals were produced by first coating the brick-faced inside surfaces of the walls with a layer of white lime (somewhat more thinly here than at the other mural tombs), then sketching the draft outlines of subjects in black on the white coating, and then filling in the draft outlines with bright mineral colors.²⁷

Of the four mural tombs, those at the Jiaotong University site are the best preserved, as noted above, though some of the murals at Ligong University are still amazingly vivid. By contrast, the Kingfisher Park murals are severely damaged: fragments of the painted surface have fallen off, either because the fixative or the paints used were of poorer quality, or because the murals were disturbed by looters or damaged by water. The murals at the Qujiangchi site also appear to have been badly damaged as a result of looting.

Relation between the Mural Tombs and Duling

The four mural tombs lie in a roughly straight line oriented north–south, some 3 kilometers west of Duling (Fig. 4.07), Xuandi’s imperial mausoleum, located on what is now called the Honggu Plain, in the modern Wild Goose Pagoda (Yanta) district (the same area around Duling in Han times was known as the Eastern Du Plain) (see Maps I.06, I.07).²⁸ Between Duling and the four mural tombs lies the site of the old mausoleum town of Duling city (*Duling yi*), which occupied a rectangular area roughly 2,100 meters (E–W) by 500 meters (N–S). According to the *Hanshu’s Basic Annals* chapter for Xuandi, work on the Duling mausoleum complex began in the spring of 65 BCE, and as construction proceeded, the area of Du county was rechristened as Duling.²⁹ Du county and the mausoleum site, as well as the Hu area farther west on the Eastern Du Plain, apparently belonged to the imperial Shanglin Park. Shanglin Park was expanded in 138 BCE, during the reign of Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE), Xuandi’s grandfather, so that



FIG. 4.07 Aerial view of Duling and associated tombs. Courtesy of Michael Nylan.

it stretched to the Qinling Mountains south of the capital to the Wei River in the north, and to the banks of the Ba River due east of the capital.³⁰

When Wudi formally expanded the park, the people on the Eastern Du Plain (identified as “the people of Hu and Du”) were resettled and compensated with new lands for new homes. Dongfang Shuo (154–93 BCE), arguing against Wudi’s expansion of Shanglin Park, addressed the hardships the proposed evictions would cause local residents: “While we encourage the growth of these forests of thorn and bramble, while we nourish deer and elk, enlarge our fox and rabbit parks, and magnify the wastes where tiger and wolf dwell, we will also be destroying men’s tombs and grave mounds, leveling their homes and cottages, causing children and young ones to think longingly of their native lands and old folk to weep and howl in sorrow.”³¹ Dongfang Shuo clearly identified the destruction of old tombs and mounds in the area as one disastrous consequence of the park’s expansion. In recent years, archaeological surveys in the area around Duling confirm that there are indeed no low-status tombs to be found there. Apparently, the destruction that Dongfang Shuo predicted did occur, and no new tombs for commoners were built in the vicinity. As a result, the mid- to large-sized tombs found in the area, including the four mural tombs under discussion, probably all relate to Xuandi’s mausoleum at Duling.

The late Western Han burials in the Duling area appear to be of only two types: They may be conferred burials (*ci zang*), located on land donated by the emperor or one of

the highest-ranking members of his court (e.g., regents, princesses, empresses), so that the high official, favorite, or descendant of a collateral or consort clan might enjoy the signal privilege of being buried near an emperor's final resting place. Or they may be "guardians' tombs" (*shouling*), that is, graves for the so-called guards (or attendants) for the mausoleum complex. These guards may have resided in Duling, so such final resting places would have been near the places where they had lived and worked. In contrast to those who had burials "conferred" upon them, these guards did not necessarily enjoy the highest status, though it seems doubtful that they would have been commoners of the lowest status either. That said, it was a privilege to be buried anywhere within the precincts of an imperial mausoleum, and most of the guards were probably buried there with the idea that, as faithful attendants, they would continue to serve the emperor in his afterlife court. While the two categories of *ci zang* and *shouling* can be distinguished, some scholars prefer to reserve the term "accompanying tombs" (*peizang mu*) for the tomb sites of one of the two types of burials. However, as archaeologists at this remove usually cannot determine a specific motive for the choice of any particular tomb site, most apply the term *peizang mu* to all tombs in the vicinity of an imperial tomb.³² (As readers may recall, the ordinary commoners who lived in Duling city were buried outside Shanglin Park, judging from the evidence at hand.)

The standard histories name some of the high officials and close associates of the emperor who received the signal honor of a conferred burial on a donated site. According to the records, the list includes, among others, Chancellor Zhang Anshi (d. 62 BCE) and Chancellor Bing Ji (d. 55 BCE);³³ the Jianzhang Palace Leader of the Guards Jin Anshang (d. 55 BCE);³⁴ and Xuandi's fifth son, Liu Jing (d. 35 BCE), King Ai of Zhongshan.³⁵ A cemetery containing the tomb of Chancellor Zhang Anshi, an offering shrine (*citang*), and more than ten tombs assigned to his family members has recently been found at a site approximately 6 kilometers west of Duling, in the southern suburbs of present-day Xi'an city; significantly, perhaps, none of the best-preserved tombs associated with that cemetery include murals on the walls or ceilings.³⁶

That Zhang Anshi's tomb lies roughly twice as far from Duling as the sites of the four Western Han mural tombs suggests that the extent of the accompanying burials associated with the Duling mausoleum complex may be far greater than scholars previously imagined.³⁷

Let us tarry a moment to consider the evolving function of these imperial mausoleum towns. Before Western Han, the big mausoleum towns, so far as we know, served mainly as construction sites, around which populations and services clustered before the interment of an emperor or king. Over time in Western Han—until Yuandi abandoned the idea of founding new mausoleum towns in 40 BCE, a decision only partly reversed under Chengdi—these mausoleum towns acquired additional functions besides housing the people employed in the construction, maintenance, or implementation of the sacrificial schedule of the mausoleum; in effect, the Han mausoleum towns became the preferred locations for emperors seeking to forcibly resettle powerful

families, who commanded assets of millions in cash, from “east of the passes.”³⁸ The *Hanshu* specifically states that “the Chancellor, generals, nobles, 2,000-bushel officials, and those with one million cash in assets” were to be resettled at Duling.³⁹ Other families voluntarily settled in Duling, presumably to be nearer such a center of power and wealth. Xuandi was the last Han emperor known to have established a major mausoleum town,⁴⁰ and possibly even after his death some prominent families chose to move or were forcibly moved to spots nearby his mausoleum complex. At some point in late Western Han, the population of Duling reached nearly three hundred thousand people.⁴¹ That so many powerful and wealthy families, able to marshal the necessary forces to protect themselves and their properties, resided near Duling may have helped to ensure preservation of the site after the Western Han court lost control over the area.⁴² We are told that, even under the most chaotic conditions—during the Red Eyebrows Rebellion, in 23 CE, when most imperial ancestral temples and their associated chambers of rest were despoiled—the Duling area was spared.⁴³ During the two centuries of Eastern Han, it appears that Duling continued undisturbed, possibly out of respect for Xuandi’s “mid-dynastic restoration,” but more likely because of Duling’s importance as a well-guarded place filled with the residential and burial sites of imperial family members and high court officials.

Although the *Hanshu* list of Duling residents is hardly exhaustive, it does include the crème de la crème of the governing elite: General of the Right Su Jian (fl. 128–120 BCE), Imperial Counsellor Zhang Tang (fl. 130–117 BCE), Imperial Counsellor Du Zhou (d. 95 BCE), and General Su Wu (d. 80 BCE), all of whom served under Han Wudi; Chancellor Wei Xian (in office 71–67 BCE), Rear General Zhao Chongguo (ca. 137–52 BCE), Du Yannian (d. 52 BCE), Minister Zhang Yanshou (fl. 62–54 BCE), Imperial Counsellor Xiao Wangzhi (d. 47 BCE), and Governor Han Yanshou (d. 56 BCE),⁴⁴ all of whom served under Han Xuandi; Chancellor Wei Xuancheng (in office 42–36 BCE), Left General Feng Fengshi (d. 39 BCE), and Superintendent of State Visits Feng Yewang (fl. 47–24 BCE), all of whom served Yuandi; Chancellor Wang Shang (in office 29–25 BCE),⁴⁵ General of the Right Shi Dan (d. 13 BCE), Governor Feng Qun (fl. 38–32 BCE), all of whom served Chengdi; Chancellor Zhu Bo (d. 5 BCE), Governor of the Capital Xiao Yu (in office 1–5 CE), Superintendent of Agriculture Xiao Xian (fl. 1 CE); and Governor Xiao You (in office 1 CE), all of whom served Aidi or Pingdi.

Since the mural tombs in the vicinity of present-day Xi’an city contain no markers, archaeologists can seldom link the tombs with specific individuals; they can only surmise the status of the tomb occupants in broad terms, based on the relative size and structure of a given tomb or set of tombs. The Qujiangchi report notes that M1 is among the largest tombs in the area; it moreover boasted a tumulus, although it was “basically destroyed” during excavation.⁴⁶ On that basis, the authors of the excavation report deem the tomb occupant to have been an important official at the county, commandery, or provincial level.⁴⁷ Similarly, the mural tomb at Ligong University had originally been topped by a high tumulus, as noted above.⁴⁸ We can deduce that the rank of the

Ligong tomb occupant must have been comparable to that of an official earning a salary of 2,000 bushels or above, perhaps a commandery Governor.⁴⁹ The excavation report for the Kingfisher Park mural tomb assigns the occupant the status of a “local lord, an aristocrat at the rank of marquis, or a high official ranked at 2,000 bushels or more.”⁵⁰

Many features of the mural tombs make it obvious that the occupants were not ordinary commoners. The mural tombs are strikingly different from the majority of recently excavated tombs clustered in the east, north, and west of the site of the Western Han capital of Chang’an; the commoners’ tombs are small, crowded together, and filled with the simplest of grave goods—all likely indicators that their occupants were lower down the social scale. At the same time, these mural tombs do not rank among the largest tombs found in the Chang’an area. Indeed, tombs in the Xi’an area that were built on a grander scale and known to be occupied by members of the imperial Liu clan conspicuously lack murals; and Jiang Yingju, senior archaeologist in Shandong, has noted that the grandest tombs conferred on princes and favored chancellors once had silk hangings on their walls, so that the tombs with murals, no matter how expensive their mineral colors, probably represented a less costly or lower-status version of the tombs employing the silk paintings like those found at Mawangdui.⁵¹

Preliminary Analysis of the Evidence

Any analysis of the Chang’an mural tombs in late Western Han must begin with the striking differences between Qujiangchi M1, on the one hand, and the three other mural tombs in the Chang’an area, on the other. Not only are the paintings at Qujiangchi M1 executed in a much simpler, more freehand style; they are found in the access ramp to the tomb, not in a burial chamber or corridor. (In that single respect, the Qujiangchi tomb may bear closer affinities to the Baling tomb, excavated in 2001, where fragments of colored designs purportedly were also found in an access ramp.)⁵² Various excavation reports attempting to explain the discrepancies between M1 at Qujiangchi and the other three mural tombs do so in one of three ways, speculating that the tomb muralist was “an ordinary artisan drawn from the ranks of the commoners who participated in the tomb construction”; that the muralist was given leave to draw whatever he liked “in his spare time”; or that the relatively simple line drawings at Qujiangchi reflect an earlier stylistic stage later superseded.⁵³

All three theories are ludicrous. We can dispense with them on several grounds: the skill utilized in the Qujiangchi scenes argues against an unskilled artist;⁵⁴ gathering the tools and materials to make these murals required advance planning and purchases, suggesting a seasoned professional rather than a local amateur; it is hard to imagine any scenario in which relatives of the deceased with enough money and know-how to commission such a professional would then deign to give that artisan an entirely free hand in devising the tomb’s entire decorative program; and the complete absence of colorful murals in low-status tombs within the Chang’an suburbs argues equally against

an amateur. A more reasonable conclusion envisions a highly accomplished painter at Qujiangchi, perhaps someone brought to Chang'an specifically for this commission.⁵⁵

How, then, to account for the seeming simplicity of the drawings found in Qujiangchi M1? One possible explanation is that the person who commissioned the paintings asked an artisan to make preliminary sketches on the fresh earth, as he or she planned to have the tomb finished later by another accomplished artist employing the repertoire of rich mineral colors that we find elsewhere. In any case, the Qujiangchi painter was evidently aware of the main decorative conventions employed in earlier murals in the capital region,⁵⁶ from the time of the Qin empire onward. We can presume also that the Qujiangchi artisan would have modified aspects of the old decorative program when adapting the painting conventions from the earlier shaft tombs to the newer, more horizontal tomb chambers increasingly favored in late Western Han.

Mural tombs first made their appearance in the Luoyang area, we think, several decades before they came to Chang'an in late Western Han. The delay may have been due to tight enforcement of the sumptuary regulations relating to burials, which we would expect to be stricter near the capital at Chang'an than at Luoyang, some distance from the main seat of political power.⁵⁷ The supposedly "sketchy" paintings at Qujiangchi M1 (see Fig. 4.02), placed not in the tomb chamber itself but in the first level of the access ramp, bear no signs of being hurriedly executed. Perhaps the tomb patron was simply afraid of offending the finely graded sumptuary regulations that tended to be strictly upheld in the Western Han capital region, according to local archaeologists.⁵⁸ After all, certain groups were forbidden to use certain types of grave goods, lest those goods identify the tomb occupant in the afterlife as ranking higher than was justified; thus the mere presence of pictorial stones or tomb murals in the main burial chamber (or worse, the hanging of the prohibitively expensive silk paintings associated with princely tombs) might well have been risky. Perhaps to "fudge" the issue, an ambitious yet cautious patron resorted to having only the access ramp walls painted. Certainly, the subjects portrayed at Qujiangchi M1—great numbers of animals or hunting scenes—gestured toward high-status activities, despite the simpler structure and smaller scale of the tomb. Western Han members of the court were especially fond of hunting, so they tended to want great numbers of animals to accompany them in death;⁵⁹ the pictures of animals at Qujiangchi might substitute for the many slaughtered animals and pottery models typically buried in the tomb pits of the high-ranking dead. Then, too, since the Qujiangchi M1 site lay within the boundaries of Han Wudi's extensive parklands at Shanglin, the tomb patron may have wanted to acknowledge the lush natural environment of his burial site. Indeed, with Shanglin Park closed to outsiders, those assigned to live within its boundaries doubtless reveled in their privileged access to a range of opportunities for leisurely pleasure-taking amid the spectacularly varied plant and animal life celebrated in epideictic poetry. Is it sheer coincidence that none of the late Western Han mural tombs in the capital suburbs feature the sorts of didactic stories that typically appear in mural tombs in the Luoyang area, or refer to the mythic

themes depicted so often in the mural tombs of contemporary Luoyang and in the later Shaanbei pictorial bricks?⁶⁰ So far as we know, to date no tombs in the Chang'an area illustrate filial sons or exemplary women either.

The art historian Zheng Yan once remarked that the pictorial content of the Han murals reflects deeply held beliefs of the mourners of the time: "Standard funerary themes (e.g., the idea of immortality) were very difficult to express in other mediums, but paintings allowed viewers to see such themes displayed in visual form."⁶¹ Still, the urge to express belief in immortality seems to have been less important in late Western Han Chang'an mural tombs than elsewhere; aside from the one feathered immortal at Ligong University, and the constellations on the ceiling at Jiaotong University, few explicit references to apotheosis, cosmology, or salvation appear in the late Western Han mural tombs near Chang'an.⁶² Presumably the splendid depictions in the Chang'an mural tombs of the sun, moon, and stars, like those of hunting and banquets, spoke to the memories, experiences, and aspirations of the patrons who commissioned the tombs, of their families and the tomb occupants themselves, even if the themes portrayed do not seem particularly personalized or expressive. At the same time, the human and immortal subjects of the paintings are extremely life-like and detailed, as a close examination of the birds associated with the astral bodies reveals (see Fig. 4.03).

Xi Qifeng and Yang Xin believe that three circumstances eventually prompted the use of murals in Western Han tombs: first, changes to the architectural forms of the Western Han tombs, from vertical shafts to horizontal layouts; second, the development of palace murals; and third, the presence of a great number of professional painters working in several coexisting styles of painting.⁶³ The convergence of these factors cannot account for what seems like the abrupt appearance of mural tombs in late Western Han, since the architectural style of tombs changed in every era; the relationship between palace and tomb murals has not been sufficiently studied, given the paucity of information; and the sheer number of painters or painting styles had no direct bearing on the rise of tomb mural paintings. Conceivably, the artisans who decorated tombs may not have produced art and artifacts for the living; the mere fact that walls exist in residences and palaces, as well as in tombs, is no guarantee that the same artists worked in both aboveground and belowground spaces. All we know is that, by Zhangguo (475–222 BCE), the greater Chang'an metropolitan area already had large cave tombs similar in layout to the dwellings of the living. But only in late Western Han did the mural tombs appear in Chang'an in "comparatively large examples of mid-sized tombs . . . that had tomb chambers built of bricks and equipped with stone steps."⁶⁴ These specific features of the tombs imply occupants who did not belong to the imperial Liu clan but enjoyed relatively high status; some of them or their descendants may have coveted higher status in the afterlife. So art historians still lack a convincing thesis to explain why the Chang'an mural tombs appear in late Western Han, though the gradual transition from vertical shaft to horizontal tomb chamber may suggest the possibility that

patrons decorated the tomb chamber walls like their houses. And we can but speculate as to the reasons why the Chang'an decorative program differs so profoundly from those elsewhere in the Central States and at the frontiers.

Conclusion

As archaeological evidence continues to accumulate, surely some of the foregoing will be revised. But the current state of the evidence supports the working hypothesis that the mural tombs appearing in the capital region in late Western Han were associated with Duling county, Duling city, and the Duling imperial mausoleum complex. Proximity to Xuandi's imperial burial site yielded geomantic benefits. Though we may never know who was buried within these four mural tombs, they and their families were clearly of status high enough to justify their burials within the imperial Shanglin Park, so long as they complied somewhat with the prevailing sumptuary regulations while modeling their tombs on those of their superiors. To such middling tomb patrons—unable to afford silk hangings or unwilling to risk the possible repercussions of flouting the sumptuary regulations—it would have seemed natural to ask professional painters to include scenes of the fabled activities of Shanglin Park, as residence in the parklands, in this life or the next, was a perquisite few could hope to enjoy. While the field of art history remains a relatively undeveloped discipline in the People's Republic of China, perhaps this is all that we can honestly say about the late Western Han mural tombs in Chang'an, except to note the exceptional tenderness in the intimate family scenes.⁶⁵

Notes

- 1 Yan Genqi 2001, 115–20; Liu Rui and Liu Tao 2010, 170–77. The latter text ascribes this Mangdang tomb (referred to as the Shiyuan) as the Western Han tomb for a former queen of Liu Wu, King Xiao of Liang (d. 144 BCE).
- 2 In Baotou, Inner Mongolia, Han-style murals (mainly cloudy volutes) that date to the first century BCE have also been found; this is puzzling, since Baotou is far from any major center of power. See *Neimenggu zhong nan bu Handai muzang* 1998, 204.
- 3 See Huang Peixian 2008, 30, for further information on Luoyang, Liaoyang, Inner Mongolia, and Xuzhou.
- 4 Presumably all were built in areas believed to have good geomantic properties. Judging from the rich Han tomb sites excavated to date, the most auspicious geomantic sites were concentrated in present-day Weiyang district, in areas near the old Xianyang city walls and the Ba Bridge district. I believe that any location close to the Chang'an city walls would have been relatively inauspicious and therefore used mainly for burials of small-scale artisans, commoners, and the poor. (Certainly, many small-scale tombs, crudely built and with few grave goods, have been found in those areas.) NB: When the excavation reports speak of the "eastern, northern, and southern suburbs," the referent is present-day Xi'an city (not Western Han Chang'an).
- 5 Xu and Zhang 1987 speculates that the Qujiangchi tomb may be as late as early Eastern Han; Xu and Zhang, however, date Qujiangchi to late Western Han. See Sun Minzhu 1998 for Xiao Wangzhi as the possible occupant of the Jiaotong University mural tomb. Early in Yuandi's

reign (48–33 BCE), Xiao Wangzhi served as an important advisor to the emperor on ritual matters, as he had been a student of the renowned ritual master Hou Cang. In 47 BCE Xiao committed suicide, and Yuandi blamed himself for the tragedy. This increases the likelihood that Xiao would have been buried with some honors. See *Hanshu* 78.3271, 78.3287–88.

- 6 Below, I speculate that those who commissioned the tomb had a special reason for its unusual layout.
- 7 However, Yang Hong, personal communication, 2011, believes that the painting traditions on display in these mural tombs had many possible sources, including lacquers from the pre-Qin period, also from Qin (221–210 BCE) and Western Han. The early Western Han rulers hailed from an area associated with Chu (where painted lacquers abound), but current scholarship has not resolved the complicated questions that arise in connection with regional cultures and regional influences. In all likelihood, people of different statuses, even within the same area (e.g., the capital), would have been familiar with different artistic traditions and conventions. For Yang's views, see Yang Hong 2011.
- 8 Cheng and Zhang 2006 describes the discovery in October 2001 of a *peizang mu* (accompanying tomb) for Baling. If the Baling fragments can be proven to be from the early Western Han, circa 180 BCE (when the Baling mausoleum was presumably begun), then the continuous tradition of decorated Chang'an mural tombs would begin much earlier than hitherto imagined. Unfortunately, as of the summer of 2013, no line drawings or photographs of the Baling fragments had been made available. Zhang Xiangyu, in a personal conversation with Michael Nylan in 2012, conceded that the Baling fragments may not date from early Western Han; indeed, they may date to a time well after the late Western Han mural tombs treated here. Local archaeologists (including Cheng Linquan) have either remained silent on the issue or spoken out (as Zhang Xiangyu did privately), saying that they cannot determine the precise boundaries of the area covered by the Baling imperial mausoleum site, let alone the boundaries of the area covered with the *peizang mu* associated with Wendi's tomb there. So we should not expect convincing evidence connecting the few Baling fragments of mural paintings with the history of the excavated mural tombs near the Western Han capital of Chang'an.

Note a further possibly relevant discovery made in May 2003: an old tomb found on a worksite near Xinzhu village, northeast of Xi'an. Machines turned up traces of paintings on a piece of the back wall and on the tomb ceiling. Only red-colored cloud patterns are discernible, however. Based on the style of the tomb and a few of the burial goods, archaeologists date this tomb to either late Western Han or to the Xin dynasty (9–23 CE).

- 9 The secondary tomb is tentatively identified as the tomb of Zhang Anshi's daughter-in-law.
- 10 Discrepancies exist in the excavation reports for these four mural tombs. Nor do the maps for the tomb locations perfectly coincide. For example, the Google Earth map in some places contradicts the map provided in the Kingfisher Park excavation report. Every effort has been made to supply the best figures and maps available.
- 11 The excavation report does not specify how the bricks got their green color; it says only that at the tomb "the bricks are green" (*qing zhuan*).
- 12 See Xu and Zhang 1987. However, a contrary but unverifiable report claims that some green-glazed pottery was found in the tomb.
- 13 That is, the higher register on the support columns.
- 14 Xu and Zhang 1987, 42, says that on the southern wall of the burial chamber there is the head of an animal, and then others are listed.
- 15 The main burial chamber has two inner doors of wood, but the door leading to the outside is made of brick. That door was damaged by or at the time of excavation, but we have no idea when the damage was sustained. We suspect looters are responsible, however, as the brick entrance door was only six layers of bricks high.

- 16 For the figure of a pottery model from this tomb, see the original site report.
- 17 See Cheng Linqun 1991, 13–20.
- 18 See *ibid.*, 6–11.
- 19 The excavation report is unclear as to whether this is some sort of a fixative or mineral color wash.
- 20 See Cheng Linqun 1991, 13, 49–53.
- 21 A mere 5 degrees toward the west.
- 22 The repetition of the number 142 appears to be entirely coincidental and without significance.
- 23 For the mural tomb at Ligong daxue, see *Wenwu* 2006, incl. color plates.
- 24 For the mural tomb in Kingfisher Park, see *Wenwu*, no. 1 (2010): 26–39. The best account of the tomb in English is *Zhongguo zhongyao kaogu faxian* 2009, 111–16.
- 25 Art historians working on better-documented societies have been quick to point out the routine departures from daily life and architecture; see, for example, Weiseman 2011, esp. 18–31 (“Domestic Havens: Fact and Fiction”). Also of interest in this regard is Fabricius 1999, on Totenmahl (funerary banquet scenes).
- 26 This was a screen (*wei man*).
- 27 See *Wenwu* 2010.
- 28 Liu and Li 1987, 101; *Hanshu* 12.253; *Sanfu huangtu*, 372n1.
- 29 *Hanshu* 8.253.
- 30 He Qinggu 2005, *juan* 3, 216, 218, and *juan* 4, 230; Wang Shejiao 2009, 198–200.
- 31 *Hanshu* 65.2849–50, translation modified from Watson 1974, 86.
- 32 Readers will note that neither *shouling* nor *peizang mu* seems to have been a term used in Han times. The word *shouling* appears once in *Hou Hanshu* and not at all in *Hanshu*, and *peizang mu* was evidently used only during and after Tang (618–907 CE).
- 33 For Zhang, see *Hanshu* 59.2653. As recorded in Yue Shi’s (930–1007 CE) *Taiping huanyu ji*, *juan* 25, Bing Ji’s tomb would have been situated between the tomb of Xuandi and the tomb of Xuandi’s empress at Shaoling. Northeast of Dongcao village, in Dazhao township (present-day Chang’an county), is a tomb with a stele inscribed by Bi Yuan (1730–1797 CE) that reads, “The tomb of Bing Ji, Han Chancellor.”
- 34 *Hanshu* 68.2963.
- 35 *Hanshu* 80.3326.
- 36 This tomb is found near the northern border of the Aeronautical Technical Industrial Park. The one possible exception is mentioned in certain sources (see n. 8 above). Regarding the cemetery, a bronze seal measuring 4 by 7 centimeters and inscribed with the character Zhang 張 was found in the tomb. Moreover, about twenty earthen seals were found inscribed with “Chief Clerk of the General of Defense.” On this basis, the tomb has been identified as that belonging to the General of Defense Zhang Anshi (although conceivably it could belong to a high official once in Zhang’s employ). See Li Yongli 2010; *Xi’an wanbao* 2011; *Kaogu yu wenwu* 2011, no. 2:31–39. That the tomb of Chancellor Zhang Anshi himself does not sport any murals is now easily explained. Jiang Yingju 1998, in a pathbreaking paper, suggests that the highest-ranking tombs in Western and Eastern Han had silk hangings on the wall, rather than the less costly painted murals or pictorial stones (see below).
- 37 The Zhang family lived in Du even before Xuandi started building his mausoleum there; they had held high rank since the time of Han Wudi. For that reason, it seems unlikely that Zhang Anshi’s tomb and the family cemetery were not part of the same ritual order as, say, the burial of Huo Qubing (140–117 BCE) at Maoling, where a high mound marks Huo’s gravesite, or the burial of Dong Xian (22 BCE–1 CE), near Aidi’s (r. 7–1 BCE) mausoleum.
- 38 Liu and Li 1987, 101–4; cf. Liu and Li 2003, 204–10, based on *Hanshu* 1.66, 28.1642, 64.2802, and so on. For Chengdi’s partial restoration of the discontinued policy (which few have noticed), see Nylan’s introduction and Loewe’s “Chengdi’s Two Tombs” chapter in this volume.

- 39 *Hanshu* 8.253. The term *xi* (transferred) used in this passage is interesting, as it may indicate forced resettlement.
- 40 Compared with Xuandi's efforts, we know very little about Chengdi's efforts to establish a similar mausoleum town near Changling. Readers should recall that five thousand families were initially moved to Changling, before the site was abandoned, it being decided that Chengdi's tomb had better remain in its original location north of the Wei River: for details, see "Chengdi's Two Tombs" chapter in this volume. I assume that by Chengdi's reign, the Han throne felt no need to force local strongmen to move to the capital area, since they had already been brought under control. Editors' note: Many older secondary studies of the local magnates disagree, but this view is shared by a growing number of young scholars in the People's Republic of China, including Tian Tian (see her chapter in this volume).
- 41 Liu and Li 1987, 101. *Hanshu* 28A(B).1544 does not give a precise figure for Duling's registered population in 2 CE.
- 42 From the *fu* composed by Ban Gu (32–92) and Zhang Heng (78–139), who must have visited the areas they described in their poems, we can conclude that until mid-Eastern Han most of the Western Han capital at Chang'an, including the Shanglin Park area, was relatively well preserved. But some records suggest destruction in the area during Wang Mang's (45 BCE–23 CE) and later rebels' occupations, especially in the northern sectors of the old capital; see *Hanshu* 99C.4162–63, 4190. *Hanshu* 99C.4193 specifically states that all the Han imperial tombs were looted except for Baling and Duling (both east of the capital).
- 43 *Hanshu* 99B.4193.
- 44 Zhang was the second son of Zhang Anshi, who succeeded his father as noble in 62 BCE.
- 45 See n. 5 above for the Jiaotong University tomb occupant. Each of these people held high office, with an annual salary of 2,000 bushels or more (i.e., ministerial rank or above).
- 46 See Xu and Zhang 1987
- 47 Cheng and Zhang 2006.
- 48 See *Wenwu* 2006.
- 49 Sun, Cheng, and Zhang 2005.
- 50 See *Wenwu* 2010.
- 51 Jiang Yingju 1998.
- 52 But see my cautions about this, registered in n. 8 above.
- 53 See Xu and Zhang 1987.
- 54 These murals call to mind sixteenth-century Italian frescoes.
- 55 At the same time the possibility exists that the pit or shaft tomb chambers that were standard during early to mid-Western Han originally contained some sort of murals on the walls, also that artisans trained on the spot were involved in painting the Qujiangchi Han tomb mural. A recent report by Lucas Nickel supports my hypothesis, in that he demonstrates the existence of professional and hereditary artisans who worked to build the Han dynasty's tombs. See *Wenwu* 2010; Nickel 2011.
- 56 Some aspects of that decorative style appear in late Western Han lacquers. For those, see Figure I.04a.
- 57 Readers should recall that Han laws strictly forbade those of lower rank to ape the burial privileges of higher-status families. For the possible coexistence of two kinds of artists, those specializing in a freer style and those working in a tighter style, see Wu Hung, in Barnhart et al. 1997, 27–34. A fourth possibility also exists: that this painting of mural tombs was relatively new to the area and ideas were not yet fixed about the proper way to handle such tombs. That explains why the dating of the tombs is so crucial.
- 58 This is perhaps because some early Western Han kings ruling grand fiefs in the east—like the king (queen?) buried at Mangdang Shan in a splendid mural tomb—were granted the right

- to have mural paintings in their tombs, and aspirants to power commanding sufficient wealth longed to usurp that privilege. Wang Xiaomeng and other Xi'an archaeologists have all commented on how strictly sumptuary regulations were observed in the Xi'an area.
- 59 This can be seen from the tombs of Han Jingdi (r. 157–141) and Zhaodi (r. 87–74). See *Han Pingling kaogudui* 2002.
- 60 By contrast, tombs outside the capital area often illustrate legendry or historical figures (e.g., Fuxi and Nüwa); see *Helin'ge'er Han mu bihua*, for example. For details, see Murray 2007.
- 61 Zheng Yan 2005.
- 62 For example, in three Luoyang tombs—Bu Qianqiu (dated between 86 and 49 BCE), Qianjing-tou, and M61 at Shaogou—immortality themes dominate, along with references to mythical figures, whereas at Ligong and Jiaotong Universities the murals feature only one or two references to the immortality cult, among many scenes unrelated to immortality. I remain unsure whether the figure routinely identified as an “immortal” among the constellations actually is one; the portrait may instead be one of an animal transformed into a humanoid. See Lü Jinsong 1993.
- 63 Xi and Yang 2009.
- 64 Cheng and Zhang 2006.
- 65 See the mother-and-child scenes at Kingfisher Park, and perhaps some of the Ligong scenes. Prior to the reports of these excavations, art historians and archaeologists thought that such tender family scenes might be limited to the Chengdu Plain area, where they abound.

5

Chang'an's Funerary Culture and the Core Han Culture

Huang Yijun 黄义军

MOMENTOUS CHANGES IN BURIAL CULTURES OCCURRED FROM THE LATE Zhanguo period (475–222 BCE), when the pre-imperial Qin kingdom first made its capital at Xianyang (near present-day Xi'an), through the short-lived Qin empire (221–210 BCE) and the end of Western Han (206 BCE–9 CE), whose capital of Chang'an lay 19 kilometers southeast of Xianyang. The focus of this chapter is the gradual emergence, in Chang'an and eventually elsewhere, of a distinctive Han burial culture (dubbed the "Core Han Culture" by archaeologists) over the course of the first century BCE. This chapter also considers how this culture, distinctive at first to Chang'an, over time spread throughout the territory under direct Han control.

Many studies of Western Han analyze its political and intellectual history, mainly based on the received literature but increasingly with reference to excavated texts. By contrast, most of the evidence used here is archaeological and thus references several cultures identified by archaeologists who have looked at thousands or even tens of thousands of sites, comparing such easily observable features as tomb structures and building materials, the types and numbers of coffins, the numbers and types of grave goods, and whether and how husband and wife were buried together.¹ Obviously, extrapolation from these burial sites to aboveground practices is fraught with methodological problems. The changes described here are so momentous, however, that it seems justifiable to refer sometimes to aboveground culture in the Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties that may have fostered changes in burial culture.

Establishment and Spread of the Core Han Culture in Qin and Early Western Han

The so-called Core Han Culture took shape after 100 BCE in the Western Han capital of Chang'an. Given how close Chang'an was to Xianyang, the capital of both pre-imperial and imperial Qin, the relevance to our study of the local burial culture of Xianyang during the Qin is obvious. That said, it is best to look at burial culture in the Xianyang area from 350 BCE, since archaeologists have often noted that major changes arose in the Qin burial culture in the late Zhanguo period. They attribute such changes to the social and political reforms instituted by Shang Yang circa 350 BCE or to substantial immigration into the Qin metropolitan area by former residents of the Six Kingdoms farther east, particularly immigrants from the so-called Three Jin successor states of Han, Zhao, and Wei.² The Western Zhou-style bronze assemblages (sometimes also executed in ceramic and called *mingqi*)—assemblages that had remained in vogue in Qin for more than half a millennium³—virtually disappeared from the record after Shang Yang's reforms.⁴ They were replaced by new vessel sets that were more utilitarian in nature, whose typology can sometimes be traced back to the lands west of Qin, near Baoji: most famously, the garlic-headed urns (*hu*); but also jars (*guan*) and basins (*pen*).

These new vessel sets, combined with objects from daily life, helped to create within the tomb a sense of a self-contained world.⁵ Occasionally, as in the Panjiazhuang cemetery, vessel sets composed of lidded tripods (*ding*), boxes (*he*), and urns appear in conjunction with other grave goods. That particular vessel set (*ding-he-hu*), thought to have originated in the Three Jin area circa 350 BCE, deliberately reintroduced the vessel shapes of Western Zhou (ca. 1050–771 BCE) bronzes,⁶ and with them the social status distinctions of the old Zhou world into the burials in the Qin metropolitan area.⁷ In outlining major changes in tomb structures and burial styles that occurred in the Qin capital area, Teng Mingyu notes that by late Zhanguo the traditional Qin flexed burials in vertical pit tombs, with the deceased's head pointing west, were supplemented by catacomb tombs, that is, vertical pits with an extra "cave" chamber at the bottom. In addition, by late Zhanguo strict rules no longer applied to the orientation of the corpse, and often the corpses were buried with straight limbs.⁸

The cemetery at Panjiazhuang, located in the southern suburbs of present-day Xi'an, provides an excellent baseline from which to survey the sorts of changes that Qin's burial culture underwent from late Zhanguo onward. Panjiazhuang tombs exhibit many elements associated with an older Qin stratum, such as pit tombs, single wooden coffins, and flexed burials of single individuals; yet the grave goods undeniably reflect influences from the Three Jin (especially the typical ceramic *ding-he-hu* vessel sets). This admixture suggests the possibility that the Qin state and empire were relatively tolerant when it came to people's preferences in grave goods, even if the Qin courts prohibited using multiple nested wooden coffins for those outside the imperial clan, as current archaeological finds seem to suggest.

After the founding of the Western Han dynasty, the burial culture in and around

the capital continued to receive influences from outside the Chang'an metropolitan region. Perhaps the heaviest influence came from the former Six Kingdoms, particularly Chu, where the Western Han founder had made his home as a youth. This influx of new elements continued unabated until the last decades of Wudi's reign (141–87 BCE), with the archaeological record showing a continuation of certain aspects of the old Six Kingdoms' burial fashions dating to the pre-unification period, both in the large tombs of the high-ranking elites and in the small and mid-sized tombs of the low-ranking officials and commoners. The ensuing changes, however, happened quite slowly, and the pattern they followed in the small and mid-sized tombs differed from that in large burials.⁹

Large burials in the Chang'an area before the time of Han Wudi contained many items associated with Chu culture; clearly, the early Western Han rulers and their powerful ministers embraced the burial customs of their place of origin there. For example, at the Xin'an Brick Factory, in the southeastern suburbs of modern Xi'an (close to old Chang'an), excavators found a noble burial, with a rectangular shaft tomb housing a compartmented wooden coffin chamber (*guo*) of the type found in the Chu area.¹⁰ In all likelihood, the reason that so many of the naked pottery figurines found in the imperial funerary parks or in the largest Western Han tombs lack arms is that the artisans adapted Chu fabrication methods for wooden figurines, which had long fabric sleeves covering the arms.¹¹ Moreover, large tombs in early Western Han Chang'an, like Chu burials during late Zhanguo, contained many musical instruments—for example, phoenix-shaped drum stands with turtles as the base, and zithers (*qin* and *se*); also Chu-style apotropaic figurines to ward off evil spirits.¹² Excavators at the Longshouyuan cemetery (north Xi'an) stress the numerous similarities between the range of grave goods excavated from the high-status tombs M92 and M120 and those found in the Mawangdui tombs in the old Chu region (e.g., sets of bells and chimes)—giving rise to the hypothesis that the Longshouyuan tomb occupants may have come originally from Chu (Fig. 5.01).¹³

In contrast, small and mid-sized tombs in the Chang'an area dating to the first decades of Western Han show a higher degree of continuity with the old Xianyang Qin style than do the tombs of the newly arrived Han elites. Nearly all of the small and mid-sized tombs of the early Western Han period are the same type of vertical pit or catacomb tombs that were already prominent in the Xianyang-Chang'an area before the founding of Western Han (Fig. 5.02).¹⁴ For grave goods, the Western Han Chang'an tombs (whether small to mid-sized, or large noble tombs) continued to include the ceramic *ding-he-hu* vessel sets imitating Zhou bronzes (Fig. 5.03); objects of daily use in the world of the living, such as kettles, pots, jars, basins, and cauldrons; and assorted *mingqi*, particularly models of granaries and stoves.¹⁵ A majority of the tomb occupants were buried face-up with limbs straight, but some were still buried in a flexed position, with their heads facing west, as had been the old Qin custom.¹⁶ Around 100 BCE, at the end of the first century of Western Han rule, all tombs within the Chang'an capital



FIG. 5.01 The female servants in (a) and the winged animal in (c) are Chu-style objects from early Western Han tombs at the Longshouyuan cemetery near Xi'an. For comparison, they are juxtaposed to similar figurines (b and d) from tombs in the actual Chu area. Images a (H 20.1 cm), from Xibei Yiliaoshebeichang M89, and c (H 21.6 cm), from Xibei Yiliaoshebeichang M92, reproduce images in Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 109, fig. 74.2; and 120, fig. 80.6. Images a and c are reprinted with permission from Xibei daxue chubanshe. Image b (H 45 cm), from Mawangdui M1, reproduces *Changsha Mawangdui yi hao Han mu*, vol. 2, plate 202, with permission from the Hunan Provincial Museum and Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Sciences. Image d (H 92 cm), from Jiangling Jiudian, in Hubei, M526, reproduces *Jiangling Jiudian Dong Zhou mu*, plate 92.1, with permission from the Hubei Provincial Archaeological Institute.

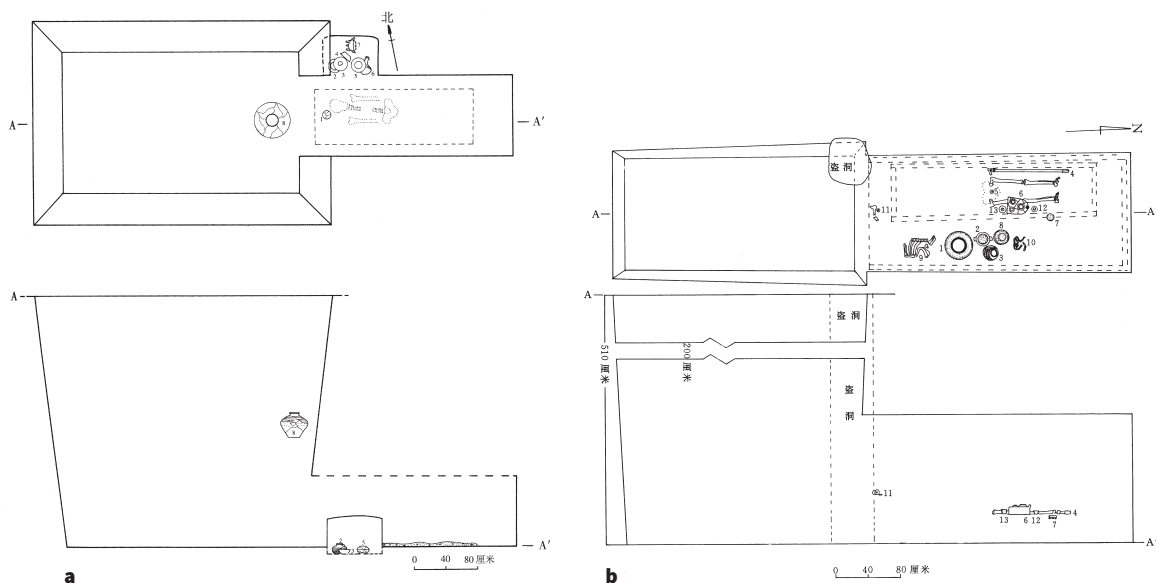


FIG. 5.02 (a) A typical vertical pit or catacomb tomb from late Zhanguo or Qin compared with (b) a similar tomb from early Western Han, both from the Xi'an area. Image a shows Shijiaxingcheng M139 (total length 6.5 m) in the Panjiazhuang cemetery. It reproduces *Xi'an nanjiao Qin mu*, 497 (fig. 42), reprinted with permission from Xi'an shi wenwu baohu kaogusuo. Image b shows Xibei Yiliaoshebeichang M12 in the Longshouyuan cemetery (total length 6.3 m). It reproduces Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 40, fig. 22, reprinted with permission from Xibei daxue chubanshe.

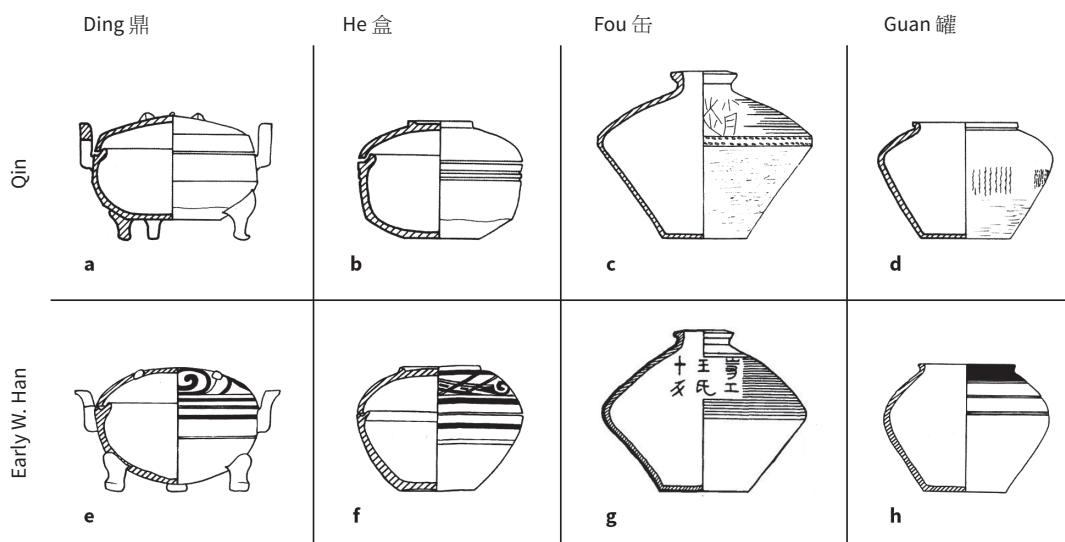


FIG. 5.03 Comparative table of grave goods found in Qin and early Western Han tombs in the Xi'an area. The top row shows a group of vessel types that typically date to the Qin era, which were found in Shijiaxingcheng M118 and M201 in the Panjiazhuang cemetery: (a) *ding* (H 14 cm), (b) *he* (H 12.4 cm), (c) *fou* (H 32.4 cm), and (d) *guan* (H 13.6 cm). The bottom row shows a group of comparable early Western Han vessel types from M63 and M193 in the Zhengwangcun cemetery: (e) *ding* (H 14 cm), (f) *he* (H 13.8 cm), and (h) *guan* (H 21.6 cm). Also in the bottom row is (g) a comparable Western Han *fou* (H 33.6 cm), from Xibeiyliaoshebeichang M7 at the Longshouyuan cemetery. Images a, b, and d are reproduced from *Xi'an nanjiao Qin mu*, 473, figs. 24.2 and 24.3; 685, fig. 177.3. Images c, e, and f are reproduced from *Xi'an beijiao Zhengwang cun Xi Han mu*, 110, figs. 64.1 and 64.2; 405, fig. 206.2. Images g and h are reproduced from Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 32, fig. 14.4

region, regardless of size, began to exhibit elements drawn from the Six Kingdoms' burial customs, thanks to the continual merging and mixing of the preexisting and imported elements of burial cultures. The resulting burial culture, which partly continued the regional Qin style but also revived key features associated with the Eastern Zhou Six Kingdoms' burials, archaeologists designate as the "Early Western Han" style.

In this style, several changes in burial culture took place, the most important being the following: The ritual *ding-he-hu* vessel sets (usually in ceramic imitating early bronzes) were largely replaced by a new vessel set composed of *ding*, *he*, and *fang*¹⁷ (a set believed to come from eastern Chu, rather than from the Three Jin area) (Fig. 5.04). The garlic-headed urns, once nearly ubiquitous in Qin tombs, virtually disappeared.¹⁸ Paint came to be applied to the ceramics shaped like ancient bronzes and, to a lesser extent, to the *mingqi* models of granaries and stoves. Given the predominance of the red and white paints, many assume that the painted pottery was modeled on lacquerware from the Chu area.¹⁹ Finally, Eastern Zhou-style nested inner and outer wooden coffins (*guan guo*) reappeared (which archaeologists speculate had been prohibited under Qin rule). For example, a majority of the Western Han tombs at the

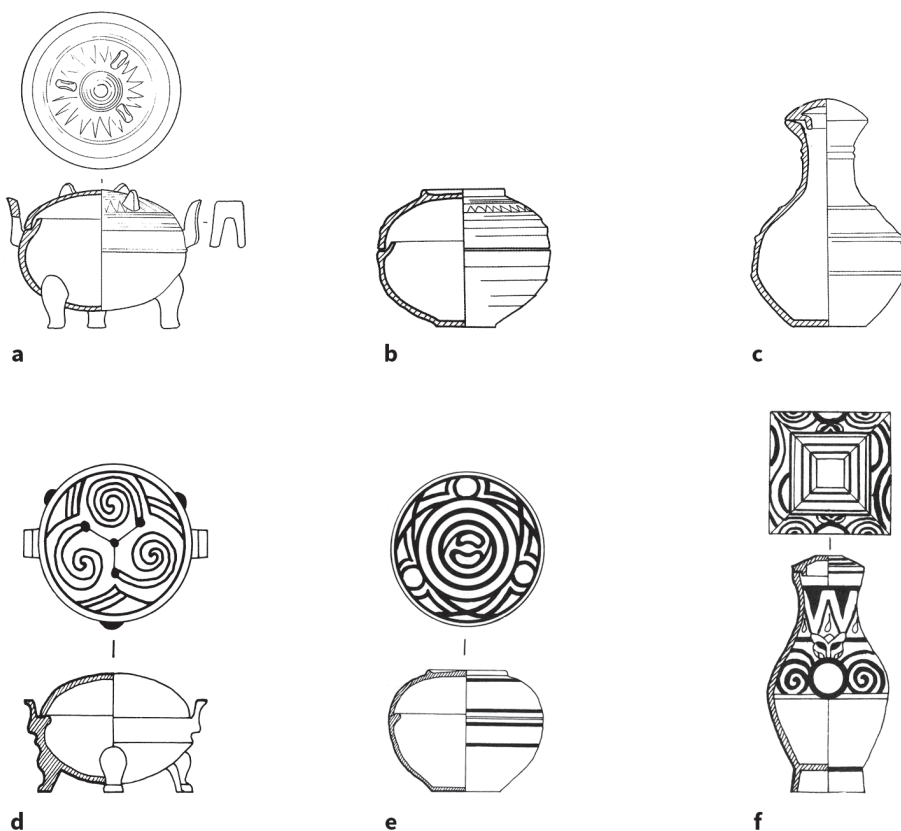


FIG. 5.04 The (a) *ding* (H 16.8 cm), (b) *he* (H 16.3 cm), and (c) *hu* (H 26.4 cm) vessel sets that were popular during the late Zhanguo and Qin periods were superseded in early Western Han by painted ceramic ritual vessel sets, as pictured in (d) *ding* (H 14.4 cm), (e) *he* (H 14 cm), and (f) *fang* (H 38.4 cm). Images a, b, and c are reproduced with permission from *Xi'an nanjiao Qin mu*, 213, figs. 43.3a, 43.1b, and 43.2c, showing Youdi-anxueyuan M71. Images d, e, and f are reproduced with permission from Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 73, figs. 47.1d, 47.2e, and 47.6f, showing Xibeiyliaoshebeichang M2.

Longshouyuan cemetery contained one or more inner wooden coffins within one or more outer wooden coffins.²⁰ The archaeological record clearly shows that the new groups entering the Chang'an area helped transform the local burial culture, which became a hybrid of local Qin customs (as modified over the fourth and third centuries BCE) and new imports.²¹ There are two ways to interpret this continuation of the burial cultures of the Six Kingdoms (particularly Chu) in the Chang'an area: we can read it either as a "return" to pre-unification ritual practices and social hierarchies, or as a reflection of the changing early Western Han burial culture within the capital region, as new and recent immigrants sought to display their wealth in the customary ways they knew from their places of origin.²²

Mid-Western Han: First Appearance of Certain Aspects of a Core Han Culture and Its Subsequent Spread

This period of the absorption of elements from the burial cultures of the old Six Kingdoms came to a close by the last decades of Han Wudi's reign (ca. 100–87 BCE). During the early part of the first century BCE, then, small and mid-sized burials in the Chang'an area ceased to display such clear influences of the burial customs from the "area east of the passes." Instead, they evolved distinctive features belonging to what the archaeologist Yu Weichao (1933–2003 CE) called the Core Han Culture.²³ Accordingly, the small to mid-sized tombs of the mid- to late Western Han period, particularly in Chang'an and its environs, exhibit the following constellation of features:²⁴

1. A horizontal tomb layout replaces the vertical pit tombs that dominated Qin burial culture, not to mention the burial cultures prevailing in other parts of the Zhou world before unification.²⁵
2. Some vertical pits (like those found in the earlier catacomb tombs) are still being constructed to access the tomb chamber, but sloping entry ramps leading to wooden coffin chambers increasingly come into use. For example, of the 139 tombs reported in *Chang'an Han mu* (*Han Tombs in Chang'an*) that date from the first century BCE, until Wang Mang's Xin dynasty (9–23 CE), only 4 are vertical pit tombs, 107 are catacomb tombs (with vertical access), and 28 are tombs with a sloping entryway leading into a horizontal chamber.²⁶ Of these 28 with sloping entryways, 21 date from late Western Han (i.e., ca. 50 BCE–9 CE), whereas only 7 date from mid-Western Han, showing the striking increase in the fashion for sloping access ramps.²⁷ (Sloping access ramps had been an exclusive privilege of the ruling families in Shang and Zhou times; nor are they seen in small or mid-sized tombs of Zhanguo or Qin times (Fig. 5.05.)
3. Rather than being dug down into the earth, tombs are increasingly constructed from bricks (first hollow bricks and then small bricks). Whereas some believe that hollow-brick tombs first appeared around Luoyang during late Zhanguo (and sometimes in the same area that would become Greater Chang'an), Western Han Chang'an seems to be the first place where tombs were fashioned from small bricks in significant numbers.²⁸ Tombs constructed from small bricks would spread widely, and construction from brick would become a hallmark of Core Han Culture tombs by early Eastern Han.
4. Single wooden coffins tend to replace the multiple nested wooden coffins that we associate with the noble and kingly tombs prior to unification. Of the 139 small and mid-sized tombs from the first century BCE that are listed in *Chang'an Han mu*, 124 tombs had only a single wooden coffin (*guan*). This fascinating development indicates that the late Western Han burial culture was moving steadily away from earlier precedents, whether the burial customs of the pre-unification Six Kingdoms or those prescribed in the transmitted ritual classics.

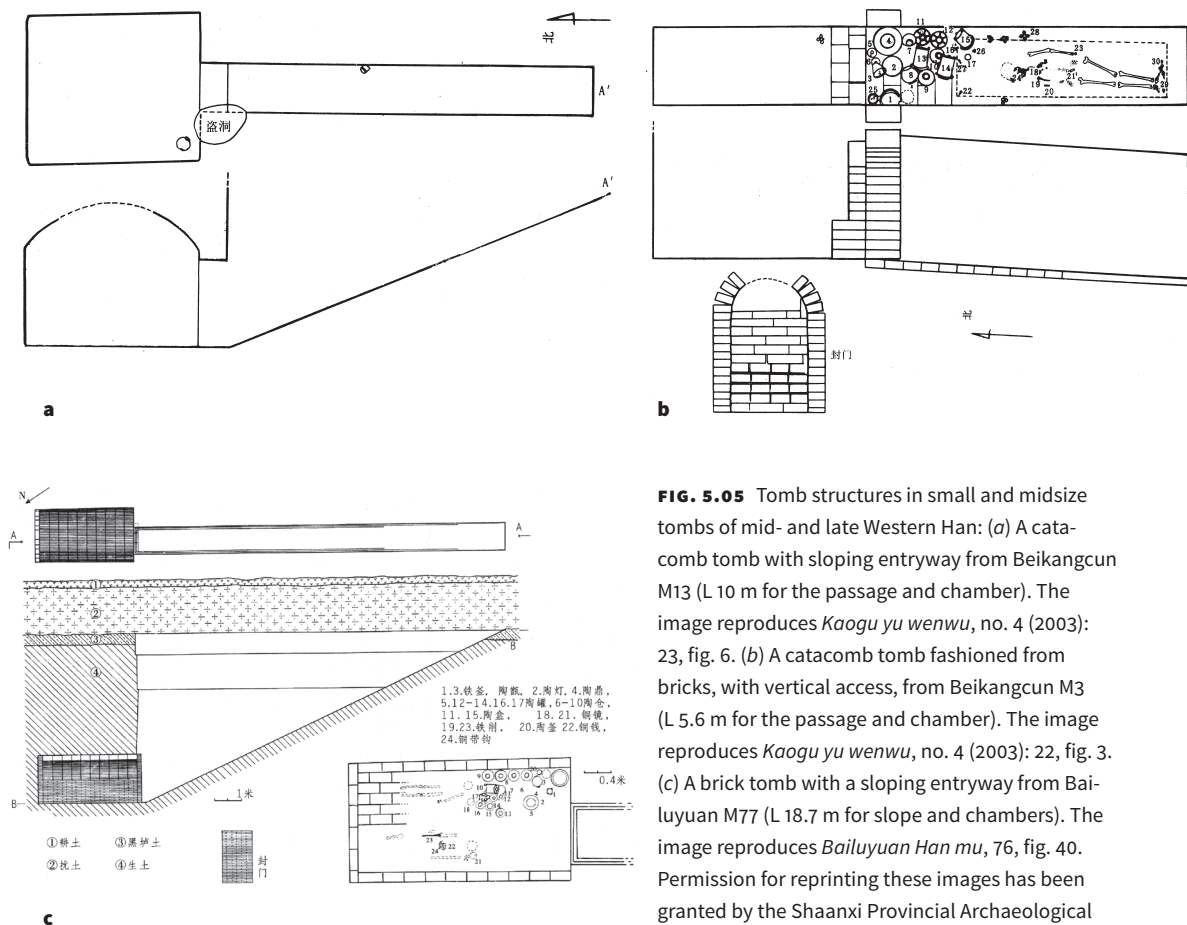


FIG. 5.05 Tomb structures in small and midsize tombs of mid- and late Western Han: (a) A catacomb tomb with sloping entryway from Beikangcun M13 (L 10 m for the passage and chamber). The image reproduces *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (2003): 23, fig. 6. (b) A catacomb tomb fashioned from bricks, with vertical access, from Beikangcun M3 (L 5.6 m for the passage and chamber). The image reproduces *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (2003): 22, fig. 3. (c) A brick tomb with a sloping entryway from Bailuyuan M77 (L 18.7 m for slope and chambers). The image reproduces *Bailuyuan Han mu*, 76, fig. 40. Permission for reprinting these images has been granted by the Shaanxi Provincial Archaeological Institute and San Qin chubanshe.

5. The arrangement of the deceased's body is supine, with straight limbs, instead of the flexed posture typical of Qin burials, particularly before 221 BCE.
6. Whereas joint burials of husband and wife in adjoining tombs or pit chambers are a feature of many burials in the Eastern Zhou and early Western Han, from the first century BCE onward it becomes more common for husband and wife to be buried side by side in the *same* pit or tomb (conjoint burials).
7. Ritual vessel sets of either the *ding-he-hu* or *ding-he-fang* types become increasingly rare²⁹ at the same time, it seems, as a fashion developed for using single wooden coffins. (In earlier eras, multiple nested coffins and sets of ritual vessels had both served as important status markers.)
8. The range of grave goods comes to be dominated by ceramic vessels for everyday use and by *mingqi* models; both appear in greater varieties and greater numbers. Among the most popular objects for daily or sacrificial use are broad basins (*pan*), goblets (*zun*), and ladles (*shao*). Meanwhile, the *mingqi* models of stoves and grana-

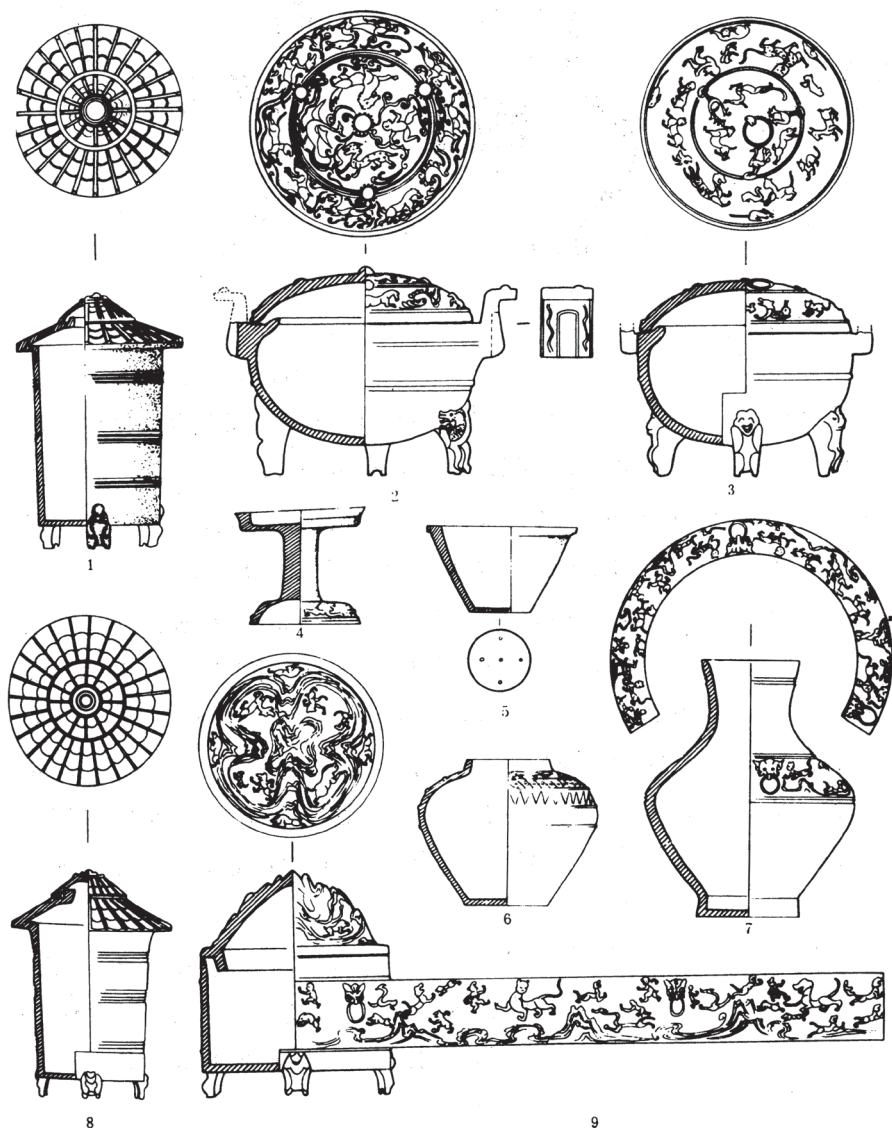


FIG. 5.06 Green-glazed ceramics from tomb M4 at Beikangcun near Xi'an; the tomb dates from the Wang Mang era or early Eastern Han: (1) *cang*, or granary, H 32.7 cm; (2) *ding*, or tripod, H 18 cm; (3) *ding*, H 16.8 cm; (4) *deng*, or lamp, H 10 cm; (5) *zeng*, or steamer, H 7.4 cm; (6) *guan*, H 12.5 cm; (7) *hu*, H 44 cm; (8) *cang*, H 29.7 cm; (9) *lian*, or wine container, H 29 cm. Reproduced with permission from *Kaogu yu wenwu*, no. 4 (2003): 25, fig. 12.

- ries are joined increasingly by models of furnaces and of domestic animals.
9. Relatively suddenly, green-glazed ceramics appear in significant numbers, with their popularity peaking during the decades-long transition period between Western and Eastern Han. Glazed ceramics are found in all of the shapes discussed above, including earthenware imitations of bronze sacrificial vessels. As these

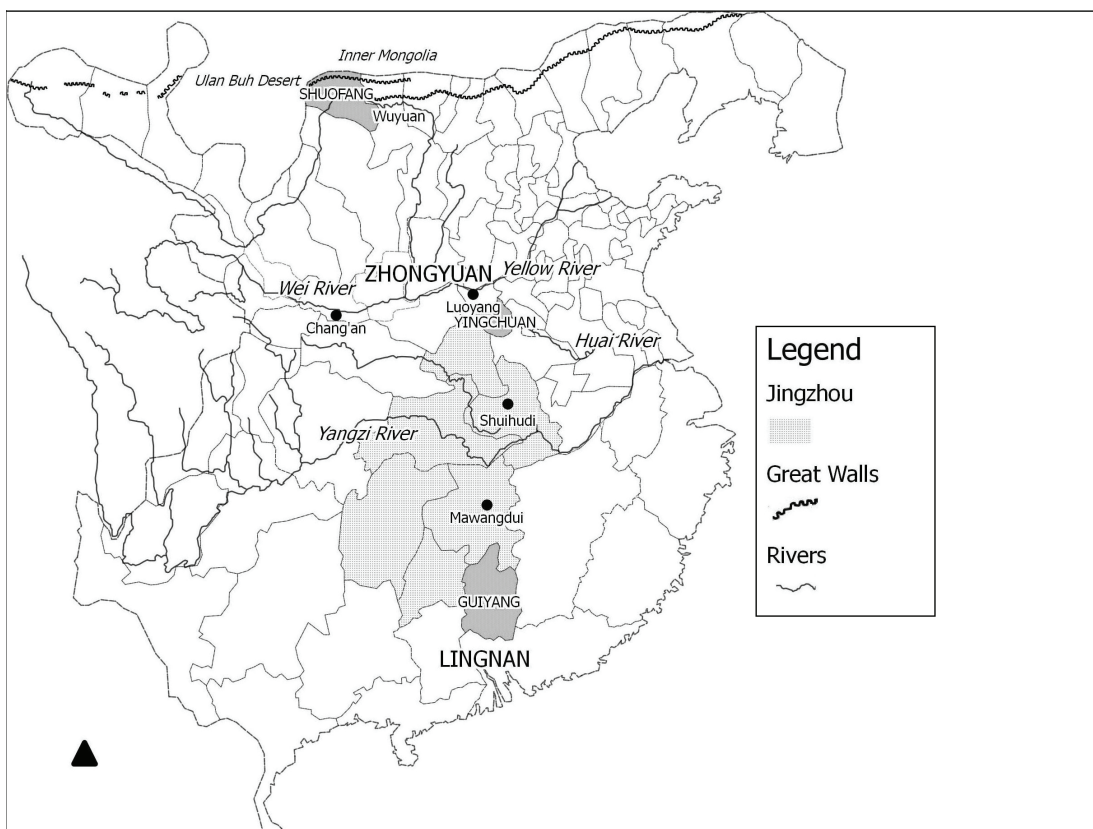
glazed ceramics usually occur in larger tombs that also contain bronzes and jades, the type of ceramic most likely indicated the high status and great wealth of the tomb occupant and his family (Fig. 5.06).³⁰

Several aspects of the nine-point list are worth noting.³¹ First, generally speaking, the innovations occurred in the small and mid-sized burials belonging to commoners or lower-level officials, rather than in the burials of the high-ranking elites; the latter, in Chang'an as elsewhere, continued to preserve the pre-unification Six Kingdoms burial customs, perhaps because such customs readily allowed for the unambiguous expression of high social status and great wealth.³² Second, in general in the small and mid-sized tombs this Core Han Culture seems to have downplayed social differences among tomb occupants (ergo the trends toward single wooden coffins and the gradual disappearance of earthenware imitations of bronze sacrificial vessels), though we do not know whether this "flattening" of non-noble funeral culture stemmed from an ignorance about the prescriptions stipulated in the several ritual classics, or a conscious decision to ignore them.³³ Third, this Core Han Culture continued to evolve well after it initially took shape in Chang'an, as it spread to other parts of the empire and developed local variants well into the Eastern Han period. Hence features that in some areas are often identified as belonging to the Core Han Culture (e.g., brick tombs with vaulted ceilings, or tombs with pictorial stones or bricks) did not originate in the Western Han capital area, but elsewhere. In particular, Luoyang, both before and after it became the Eastern Han capital, was an important center of innovations in burial culture. In late Western Han Chang'an, however, we find few if any traces of several developments already taking place in the "area east of the passes," including tombs with pictorial stones and bricks.

Perhaps a certain conservatism had taken hold of the inhabitants of Greater Chang'an in late Western Han. Or perhaps the Chang'an residents experienced greater supervision over their burial customs, compared with people elsewhere in the empire, outside the major administrative seats of power (Map 5.01).

Dissemination to the Peripheral Areas

The spatial patterns generated by the spread of this Core Han Culture to the outlying areas varied with the distance from the capital and the degree of control exercised by the central government over the particular area.³⁴ For example, brick tombs appeared in different areas at different times, only gradually replacing tombs made of timber. Furthermore, as a rule, grave goods changed faster than tomb structures. That said, a broad consensus among archaeologists sees nearly all the key components of the Western Han burial culture diffusing quickly throughout the empire—so quickly that very little time elapsed between the formation of the Core Han-type burials and their spread. Increasingly, after mid-Western Han, a single burial culture came to dominate the empire, such that the typical grave goods included in tombs in the various com-



MAP 5.01 Places mentioned in this chapter. Map generated by Daniel Shultz.

manderies and kingdoms outside Chang'an began to closely resemble those popular in the Chang'an region. Almost everywhere, the ceramic vessel sets imitating old bronzes gradually declined in number until they disappeared altogether, even as the objects of daily life and *mingqi* proliferated, both in type and in number. At the same time, the practice of burying husband and wife jointly in the same tomb chamber spread quickly.

Not surprisingly, the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River and, farther south, the area between the Yangzi and Huai Rivers, received influence from Chang'an earliest, and this influence showed itself in local burial customs.³⁵ As such places received successive waves of influence from the "core" culture of Western Han Chang'an, they adopted features from that imported culture while modifying their own earlier practices; in this way, they created new regional trends in burial cultures that simultaneously appropriated and adjusted the capital customs. As noted above, brick tombs with vaulted ceilings or with pictorial stones or bricks were first found in the area around Luoyang, though they soon became popular elsewhere.

In the far north and northeast, regions near the present-day Great Wall absorbed aspects of the Core Han Culture at their own pace, producing variations that depended

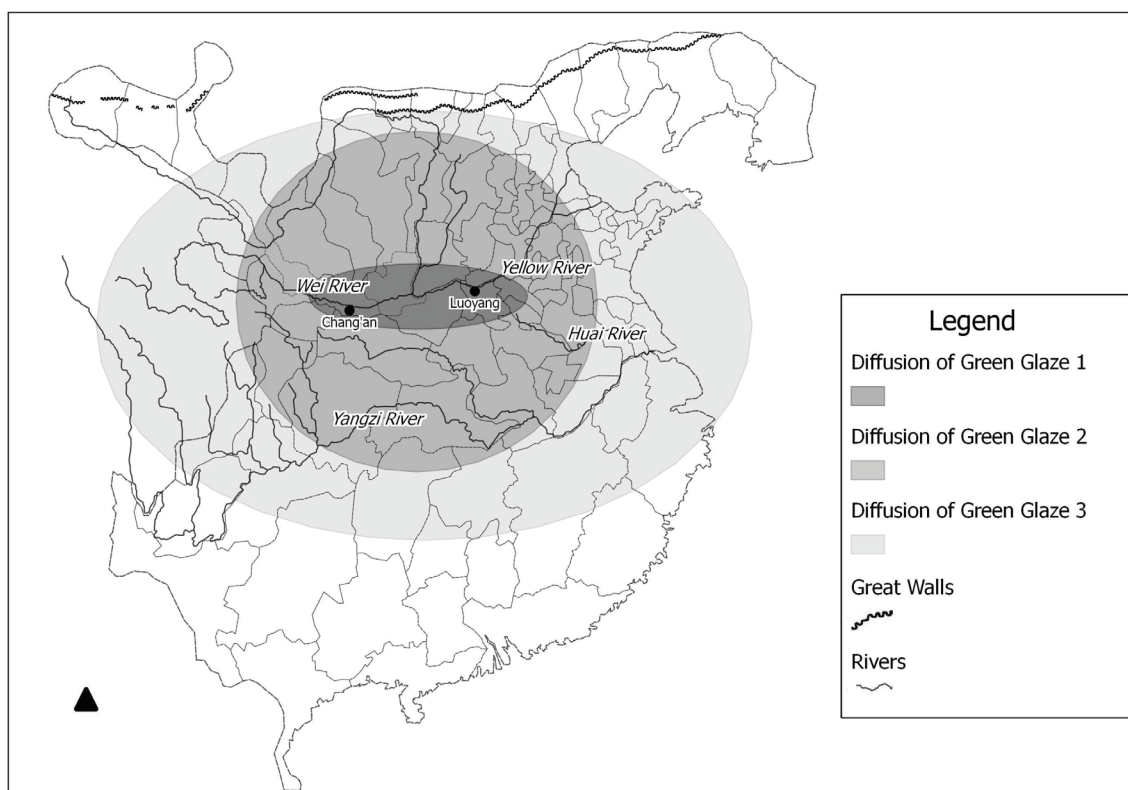
primarily on each area's preexisting local burial culture and on the particular pattern of administration imposed by the Han court.³⁶ Of particular interest in this regard is the Han commandery of Shuofang, located in the region surrounding the Great Bend of the Yellow River that corresponds to southern and central Inner Mongolia today. Early Western Han burials there do not feature the typical *ding-he-fang* sets so typical of early Western Han culture in Chang'an. On the other hand, starting from mid-Western Han, the Shuofang tombs rapidly adopt the Core Han burial practices, with the result that the tombs contain *mingqi* models of granaries and stoves already by mid-Western Han and *mingqi* models of wells by late Western Han. Moreover, by late Western Han some tombs in the area were fashioned from big bricks, hollow bricks, or small bricks.³⁷

The southeastern coastal area and the area called Lingnan (present-day Guangdong and Guangxi) were much farther from Chang'an, but even there important changes in the grave goods had taken place by mid- to late Western Han. The ceramic vessel types most popular in Chang'an (*ding*, *he*, *hu*, *guan*, and *pen*) started to appear in great numbers, along with bronze mirrors and *mingqi* models of granaries, barns, stoves, and wells, as well as offerings of real grains and fruits. In Lingnan, however, brick tombs did not appear before early Eastern Han; throughout the Western Han period, locals continued to use pit tombs with wooden structures (*guo*).³⁸

The changing spatial distribution of glazed ceramics is instructive as well. Found first in the Western Han area of Chang'an and then in the early Eastern Han area of Luoyang,³⁹ glazed ceramics spread out from those two capitals in ever widening concentric circles, closely following the most convenient modes of riverine or overland transportation. Again, the area around Shuofang proves interesting, for glazed ceramics appeared relatively early there, soon after they became popular in Chang'an; but their numbers greatly diminished in Eastern Han times, following the shifts in population at the time⁴⁰ (Map 5.02).

Dissemination Mechanisms: One Theory

This Core Han burial culture first absorbed and synthesized elements from the local cultures of the pre-unification kingdoms, especially Qin and Chu, and then fanned out from its point of origin in the Chang'an area to ever more peripheral areas. Many scholars believe that the evolution of this distinctive Han burial culture resulted from sumptuary rules issued by the court. There is, however, only limited textual evidence to support that view, especially as the sumptuary rules specified in the various ritual classics pertain to princes, nobles, and members of the governing elites, rather than to low-ranking officers and commoners. Early Western Han strips recovered from tomb M77 at Shuihudi (157 BCE) contain burial regulations for the high-ranking members of the Han nobility, which closely approximate the burial practices known from the pre-Qin period.⁴¹ Thus we can surmise what it meant when Tian Heng (d. 202 BCE)



MAP 5.02 Gradual spread outward of green-glazed ceramics from the “capital corridor” (Chang’an and Luoyang) in three major phases. Map generated by Daniel Shultz after Yang Zhefeng 2005, 230, fig. 45.

was buried by the Han founder “in the manner of a king.”⁴² We know, too, that Shusun Tong, the Qin Academician who served as the Han founder’s main advisor in ritual matters, was involved in devising suitable funerary rituals at Liu Bang’s mausoleum during Huidi’s reign (195–188 BCE).⁴³ But we can hardly be certain that the sumptuary regulations inherited from the pre-unification period and continued in early Western Han, if sometimes revised, were always being followed by mid- to late Western Han. Indeed, an edict issued during Chengdi’s reign, in 13 BCE, strongly suggests that they were not, in that the directive expressly warns members of the elite that unless they stop their blatant disregard of the sumptuary rules (including those for burials), their bad behavior will be aped by “low-ranking officials and the people.”⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the surprising uniformity in nonelite burials throughout the realm by mid- to late Western Han indicates not only that some kind of sumptuary rules were in existence, but also that effective mechanisms may have been devised to enforce them, at least in the Han administrative seats in the county and commanderies and kingdoms. This chapter will therefore turn to the probable role played in this process by local officials and internal migration.

An important responsibility of officials during Western Han was to educate the local populations. In Han Wudi's time (r. 141–87 BCE), many critics, including Dong Zhongshu (ca. 179–104 BCE), criticized the quality of the government officials assigned to administer the commanderies and kingdoms, charging that some were incapable of providing good, civilizing models for those in their jurisdictions. Dong urged his emperor to promote classical learning, on the grounds that local officials trained in the classics would better “propagate our heritage and culture.”⁴⁵ Among the emperors, Xuandi in particular was known to take a personal interest in improving local government; he therefore took special care to appoint to the localities well-trained officials determined to further the court's civilizing project.⁴⁶ By the reigns of Chengdi and Pingdi (1 BCE–6 CE), efforts to standardize all ritual practices, including burial customs, had become a primary concern of the government, which hoped by this means to unify the realm.⁴⁷ Indeed, when Han officials discussed the difficulties of “civilizing” and unifying the local populations, they generally had in mind the task of unifying marriage and mourning customs (including burial customs) across the localities.

The prestige of the Western Han court rituals and the pull of the court fashions certainly propelled some of the local changes to burial customs. But in all likelihood the implementation of such changes relied to a large extent on the efforts of those local officials who represented the court. The biography of Han Yanshou (d. 56 BCE), Governor of the wealthy commandery of Yingchuan, furnishes a good example of this:

Han Yanshou conferred with them [the elders], in order to determine the proper rituals for marriages and funerals. The new local rituals [this group devised together] drew upon past rituals, and Han Yanshou made sure that the new rituals did not go beyond the Han official regulations. He then ordered all the local candidates for the examinations (*wenxue*) [subject to recommendation by the Governor], the school officials, and their disciples and clients to don their caps and take the sacrificial implements to perform the new burial and marriage rites for the people. The local people willingly adopted their teachings, so that henceforth those who sold [ceramic models of] carriages and horses for the afterlife threw them away on the roads to market [since they could not sell them anymore].⁴⁸

Archaeological finds suggest that the new objects used in the newly adopted rituals, which supposedly followed “past rituals,” conformed to the Core Han burial culture in Chang'an. Notably, the story says that only after Han Yanshou had negotiated an agreement with the local elders did the locals learn and comply with Han sumptuary regulations. Based on this and similar passages from other Western Han accounts, the surprisingly unified burial culture we dub the Core Han Culture must be ascribed to some degree to the achievements of the local officials during mid- to late Western Han—their classical education and their determination to “improve” local customs.

Some part of this remarkable degree of uniformity in burial practices across the realm of the “great Han” may also be attributable to those government officials who returned to their home villages upon retirement. According to Chancellor Wei Xian, who served as the highest-ranking officer for four years (71–67 BCE), officials would often “request that their bones be returned their place of origin” (*qi haigu*),⁴⁹ with such requests coming more frequently from Xuandi’s reign on.⁵⁰ Presumably the prestige that such officials enjoyed, thanks to their recent court appointments, helped spread the fashion for the new capital culture, even if their version of the capital culture was mixed up with elements from their places of origin. Then, too, some officials who died while in government service would be buried where they had served, and sometimes their family members also; such burials nearly always featured elements of the dominant Chang’an style. Generally speaking, these local elites with capital connections (or rather, the local artisans they employed) tended to be more conservative about the structure of their tombs than about the types of grave goods to be placed in their tombs. Two working hypotheses are thus well worth testing, as the surviving tomb evidence permits: that tombs in distant areas that retained the local tomb structure while adopting grave goods in the Core Han style belonged to people native to the region, including officials who had retired to their home areas; and that tombs in distant areas exhibiting the Chang’an style, both in tomb structure and grave goods, belonged to officials native to the metropolitan region (or at least the Central Plains) who were buried far from their native places, or to one or more descendants of these officials. By implication, the second hypothesis means that the greater the number of burials in peripheral areas of officials (and their descendants) who hailed from the Central Plains, the faster the spread of the Core Han burial customs.

During the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi (i.e., 48–7 BCE), a relatively high number of high-ranking officials (i.e., with 2,000 bushels in salary per year) were dispatched from the Chang’an court to local administrative positions. At the same time, these officials tended to occupy their local posts for relatively short periods of time. During the period from 48 to 7 BCE, for example, 87 percent of the commandery Governors and kingdom Chancellors served in their local posts for three years or less; and of the 13 percent who served longer, only one official served more than eight years outside the capital, while more than half served outside the capital for one year or less.⁵¹

Eastern Han rulers introduced a number of changes into the local administration under court control; these changes affected both the number of officials appointed to administer a given region and the length of those officials’ terms in the localities. As a result, during Eastern Han, the number of officials sent out to serve as Regional Inspectors, commandery Governors or kingdom Chancellors increased by 260 percent. Typically, these Eastern Han officials also served for longer terms. During the reign of Guangwudi (25–57 CE), for instance, of the twenty-four commandery Governors whose names are recorded, fifteen served for more than six years, and a clear majority of the twenty-four served for more than eight years.⁵² Sometimes these officials took their families with them, and those who lacked either the means or the wish to return

to their places of origin would have been buried, along with their descendants, in or near their local administrative seats. Relevant, too, is the change in status, function, and salary of the Regional Inspectors from 7 BCE on (as noted in Habberstad's chapter in this volume): only very late in Chengdi's reign did Regional Inspectors come to equal commandery governors in salary and status, overseeing equally large staffs of bureaucratic subordinates and staying longer in the provinces—sometimes for years at a time, without ever once being recalled to the capital.

The expected outcomes of such administrative changes find confirmation in the archaeological record attesting burial customs: the late Western Han impact made by the relatively few officials dispatched from the capital for shorter periods of time was significantly smaller than the Eastern Han impact exerted by officials dispatched from the capital to the localities for longer terms, in part because fewer of those high-ranking officials in Western Han would likely have died in local office and been buried away from their family homes.⁵³

Certainly in Eastern Han the distribution pattern for the spread of brick tombs from Chang'an to the outlying areas coincides with the locations to which the court sent its more important officials. For Guiyang Commandery, near Jingzhou (present-day Hunan), we only know of one Western Han governor, whereas we have the names for twenty-four Eastern Han governors, though both dynasties lasted about the same span of time (two hundred years).⁵⁴ In Guiyang, located along the upper reaches of the Xiang River, brick tombs first appeared only in early Eastern Han, but thereafter they rapidly became common. By 1997 no fewer than eighty-two excavated Eastern Han sites were said to have brick tombs. Many of these brick tombs were topped by large tumuli, and many also were made of small bricks bearing the same sorts of molded geometric and pictorial designs popular near the capital during part of Eastern Han.⁵⁵ One Eastern Han tomb occupant has been identified as Deng Jun (possibly Lord Deng), Regional Inspector for the locality.⁵⁶ His tumulus is 12 meters high, with a circumference of 21 meters at the base.⁵⁷ I suspect that quite a few of the tomb occupants of these impressive brick tombs had close connections with the capital culture.

This chapter has already alluded to the importance of migration into the region around the capitals of Qin and Western Han, identifying this as a likely reason for the important changes that archaeologists find in tombs dating from the late Zhanguo through early Western Han periods. The linkage between the spread of the Core Han Culture and large-scale migrations is illustrated with particular clarity by the archaeological record for Shuofang Commandery, near the Great Bend of the Yellow River (see above), on the northern frontier.⁵⁸ From 127 BCE onward, large numbers of settlers were sent to the north and northwest frontier zones, including the commanderies of Shuofang and Wuyuan. By Xuandi's reign, many settlers were being sent to the frontiers to form agricultural colonies (*tun tian*).⁵⁹

In this zone archaeologists have found a large concentration of tombs resembling Chang'an tombs; such tombs date from around 100 BCE to 100 CE. As one might expect,

the number of capital-style tombs declined sharply when the Eastern Han court began to withdraw its people from the area in 50 CE.⁶⁰ The Han cemeteries in Nalintaohai, situated in the northern part of the Ulan Buh desert, within the old commandery of Shuofang, provide good examples of this phenomenon. The tombs in this cemetery, which span a hundred years, more or less, from the late first century BCE to the early first century CE, show the rise and decline of the Core Han burial culture in several ways: in the continuous decrease in the number of pottery vessels imitating bronzes and the converse increase in grave goods that either represent objects of daily life or *mingqi*. For example, out of a total of forty-five tombs, only eight have vessels sets imitating Zhou bronzes, whereas all forty-five tombs boast green-glazed ceramics in popular shapes (e.g., pots, jars, and goblets) and *mingqi* models of granaries, wells, and stoves. Small brick tombs made an early appearance here, spreading quickly in number and extent over the course of the first century BCE, and conjoint burials were common. Indeed, thirty-four of the forty-five tombs were conjoint burials, with eight additional skeletons too decayed to determine their sex.⁶¹

Interestingly, the higher-status tombs in the entire Shuofang area (including some of those at Nalintaohai) exhibit a relatively rich sampling of grave goods (including glazed ceramics), conjoint burials, and brick construction; these tombs are often located near administrative seats (i.e., the outposts supervised by Han administrators). By contrast, the lower-status tombs (of poor people?) were typically single burials in catacomb tombs containing only a few, rather crude grave goods. Typically, too, these inferior tombs were some distance from the administrative seats. Such status differences must reflect a wide variety of factors, including the migrants' different places of origin, relation to the local administrators, and comparative wealth and status.

Conclusion

In the case of the small and mid-sized tombs in the Western Han capital region, from the final decades of Wudi's reign onward, we can trace the active development of many key elements of what archaeologists have come to designate as the Core Han burial culture. This culture came together after the first century of Western Han rule, during which time the main features of Greater Chang'an's burial culture continued to reflect earlier customs associated with the pre-unification kingdoms, particularly Qin and Chu.

Obviously, the central contribution of Han Chang'an to the development of this Core Han Culture reflects the capital's political dominance; it may further reflect the limited opportunities that local inhabitants of the "area within the passes" may have had to resist the court's imposition of its new marriage, mourning, and burial regulations. Significantly, however, this Core Han Culture did not emerge, let alone spread, before the Western Han capital had eclipsed all the other major metropolitan areas as the most important cultural center in the empire.⁶² Furthermore, the spread of the Core Han Culture seems to have relied on repeat and sometimes extended visits by

court-appointed officials well trained in the classical learning the court increasingly favored, as well as on large-scale migrations to and from the capital region. Absent these two factors, it is hard to imagine the precise mechanisms by which the Core Han Culture could have penetrated the rest of empire so quickly and thoroughly, for local populations living at great distances from the capital would not necessarily have been easily persuaded to abandon their old ways while adopting the court's "civilizing" measures.

Notes

- 1 Noble husbands and wives were often buried in adjacent burial mounds; non-noble husbands were often buried with their wives in the same tomb, especially from the first century BCE onward. Unfortunately, not all Chinese archaeologists distinguish "adjacent" and "conjoint" burials, calling both "joint burials" (*he zang*).
- 2 One chapter of the *Shangjun shu* tells us that by the time of Lord Xiao (r. 362–338 BCE), Qin was already using a variety of tactics, from persuasion to forced relocation, to bring people from the Three Jin to the Qin capital of Xianyang and its hinterland. See *Shangjun shu*, *pian* 15 ("Lai min"), 111. Especially after unification in 221 BCE, Qin initiated large-scale migrations of the ruling houses, nobles, officials, and commoners from the newly conquered states to the Xianyang region to repopulate its base area. The largest such migration on record is that for 221 BCE, when Qin supposedly moved 120,000 households (*Shiji* 6.139). See Zhang Guoshuo 2011 for details.
- 3 These bronze assemblages were used to signify a carefully ordered hierarchy of lineages.
- 4 As Teng Mingyu pointed out, from middle Zhanguo and on, more and more nobles in Xianyang used bronze vessels in the Jin style instead of the ritual bronzes of the Chunqiu Qin style. See Teng Mingyu 2002, 158.
- 5 See Falkenhausen 2006, 318–21.
- 6 Zhao Huacheng 2001, 619–29.
- 7 Apparently, the ritual reforms that had transformed the burial cultures in most of the old Zhou world (i.e., the areas belonging to the Six Kingdoms by Zhanguo) had left Qin relatively unaffected. For the argument that Qin remained outside of what Falkenhausen calls the archaizing "Middle Springs and Autumns Ritual Restructuring," see Falkenhausen 2006, 367. For a nuanced critique of this idea of a ritual reform, see Thote 2010, 202–30, esp. 223–26. On the Qin grave goods in late Zhanguo and postunification Qin, see also Teng Mingyu 2002, 40.
- 8 Teng Mingyu 2002, 37–40.
- 9 The distinctions among large, small, and midsize tombs are applied loosely in this chapter, as archaeologists have not yet established clear criteria by which to distinguish a large tomb from a smaller counterpart, even for the area under discussion here; neither have social historians been able to outline clear criteria to distinguish the highest-ranking elites from regular members of the official or commoner classes. In any case, this chapter leaves the imperial tombs, also situated in the capital area, outside of its discussion, since they have not been excavated. We surmise, however, that Han imperial tombs continued many features of Qin royal and imperial burials.
- 10 The tomb belonged to Household Assistant Li Cheng. See Zheng Hongchun 1990.
- 11 However, the mortise-and-tenon mechanism suggests that they may have had movable arms made of some unknown material (cloth?) attached to the main body. See *Baoshan Chu mu* 1991, 37–38.

- 12 Han Guohe 1999, 56.
- 13 Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 243. The occupants of the large tombs in this cemetery held orders of honor (*jue*) ten through eighteen, which were comparatively high in the twenty-rank system.
- 14 For example, of the forty-two Western Han burials at the Longshouyuan cemetery, twenty-eight were either vertical pit or catacomb tombs. See Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, table 1, 256–61.
- 15 This conclusion is largely based on tombs reported in *Xi'an Longshouyuan Han Mu*, but ceramic *ding-he-hu* vessels also appear in nobles' tombs, for example, those at the Xin'an Brick Factory in Xi'an.
- 16 *Xi'an Nanjiao Qin mu* 2004, 243.
- 17 A *fang* is also called a "square *hu*," that is, a square urn.
- 18 Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 256–61.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 234.
- 20 Among the Qin tombs in the southern suburbs of Xi'an documented in *Xi'an Nanjiao Qin mu*, there is only one example of a tomb with both an inner and an outer wooden coffin (*guan guo*). By contrast, among the forty-two Western Han tombs excavated at Longshouyuan, twenty-six had one or more than one inner coffin and one wooden coffin chamber (*guo*). Ten had two inner coffins, one a single wooden inner coffin (*guan*), and one no coffin at all. In the case of four tombs, the evidence was not clear. See *Xi'an nanjiao Qin mu* 2004, 153–66, 405–38, 745–52; Han, Cheng, and Han 1999, 256–61.
- 21 *Hanshu* 1B.66, 73.
- 22 *Shiji* 129.3261–62 discusses the concentration of wealth in the Guanzhong region, claiming that the area had 30 percent of the total population and 60 percent of the total wealth.
- 23 See Yu Weichao 1999, 43–61.
- 24 For an extended description of Han tomb culture that pays attention to beliefs about death, see Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 2009.
- 25 In large tombs, vertical pit tombs continued to be used much longer, perhaps because of aristocratic conservatism (?).
- 26 Cheng, Han, and Zhang 2004, 745–47. By Eastern Han, the tombs with sloping entry ramps dominated. A reversal of the ratio of tombs with vertical access as opposed to sloping entry ramps can also be seen in *Xi'an Dong Han mu* 2009, 911.
- 27 Cheng, Han, and Zhang 2004, table 3, 869–93.
- 28 The approximate sizes for small bricks and hollow bricks are as follows: for small bricks, length 35–38 centimeters, width 15–19 centimeters, thickness 5–9 centimeters; and, for hollow bricks, length 110–16 centimeters, width 38 centimeters, thickness 20 centimeters. See *Kaogu* 1982. The hollow bricks (which are usually pictorial) are mainly decorated with geometric designs and pictures of the Four Directional Animals. Tombs built with hollow bricks appeared in the pre-unification Han kingdom (present-day Henan Province, near Luoyang), whereas tombs made of small bricks did not appear in Chang'an until mid-Western Han. Readers interested in painted pictorial bricks from Han may consult Liu Kezhong 2008, though Liu seldom specifies dating for the bricks.
- 29 They do not disappear completely, however, judging from Han and Zhang 2011, 213–44.
- 30 See Hu Lingui 1989, 61–69; *Xi'an Dong Han mu* 2009, 1025–26.
- 31 Chinese archaeologists hearing the phrase "Core Han Culture" tend to think of Yu Weichao's definition. However, as Yu Weichao's definition includes many components that are found first in Eastern Han (i.e., after the capital was no longer at Chang'an), I list here only the Western Han developments. Lian's chapter in this volume discusses the few examples of mural tombs we have from late Western Han Chang'an. Commoner tombs containing many generations of a

single family are an Eastern Han innovation. Family cemeteries like that of Zhang Anshi (d. 62 BCE) appear, so far as we know, only with noble families.

- 32 For example, the tombs at the Zhang family cemetery, which date to Xuandi's reign (74–48 BCE), have both an inner and an outer wooden coffin (*guan guo*), as was customary in the pre-Qin and early Western Han period. See *Kaogu yu wenwu* 2009; Zhang Zhongli 2011. An exception that confirms the rule is the burial of Zhang Tang, who, at his mother's urging, was buried hurriedly and in an extremely simple style: "they carried his body to the graveyard in an oxcart and buried him with an inner wooden coffin (*guan*) and no outer one." See *Shiji* 122.3144; Watson 1993a, vol. 2, 394.
- 33 This is an interesting conundrum, given that, as this chapter will later argue, classically trained officials would play an important role in spreading the Core Han Culture.
- 34 The archaeological record shows that Chang'an practices also influenced areas outside the direct control of the Western Han court, for example, in regions far to the northeast and to the northwest. Outside the Han realm, however, the influence was accepted more slowly and more spottily. This chapter cannot fully discuss all the evidence for those changes. Ultimately, influences from Western Han Chang'an burial culture can be seen wherever we find Western Han officials and merchants among the long-term residents.
- 35 Tan Changsheng 2007; Jiang Lu 2008, 82–87. Everything, including culture, traveled faster in Han times via water, as opposed to overland transport.
- 36 Zheng Junlei 2005.
- 37 Jiang Lu 2008, 82–87; Zheng Junlei 2005.
- 38 See *Hepu Fengmengling Hanmu* 2006; *Guangzhou Han mu* 1981.
- 39 In Tang, when Chang'an and Luoyang were both capitals, one can speak of the "capital corridor" generating new fashions and cultural innovations, as in Tackett 2014, chap. 2.
- 40 Yang Zhefeng 2005.
- 41 Peng Hao 2009.
- 42 *Hanshu* 1.57. Tian Heng, a member of the royal family of the old state of Qi, crowned himself King of Qi after Gaozu's ally Han Xin captured his nephew Tian Guang, who had styled himself King of Qi before his capture.
- 43 *Shiji* 99.2725 has Shusun Tong "gradually fixing all the Han liturgical rules for the court ceremonies."
- 44 *Hanshu* 10.324–25.
- 45 *Hanshu* 56.2512. The so-called law of avoidance, which strictly forbade local officials from serving in their home regions, was firmly in place by Wudi's reign; Wang Zijin speculates that this might have promoted both the rise and the spread of an empire-wide culture. See Wang Zijin 1999.
- 46 *Hanshu* 89.3624; Zhou Changshan 2006, 24–34. Readers should note that few of the higher offices in Han local administration were exclusively civil or military; therefore, one should also be thinking of the army men assigned to the localities.
- 47 *Hanshu* 10.324–25, 12.355.
- 48 *Hanshu* 76.3210.
- 49 *Hanshu* 73.3107.
- 50 Other officials of Xuandi's time who received permission to retire to their home regions include Shu Guan, Yu Dingguo, and Xue Guangde. See *Hanshu* 71.3040, 3045, 3048.
- 51 See Zhou Changshan 2006, table 3.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 110, tables 3 and 4. Note that for Western Han, Zhou's data concerns mostly officials in the capital area, making generalization difficult; but see Kamiya 2009, 312–14. I wish to acknowledge Luke Habberstad's assistance in fleshing out this note.
- 53 Yang Zhijiu 1992, 88–89.

- 54 Unfortunately, though in Hunan there are dated Han tombs (usually with inscriptions of the date on the tomb bricks), it is hard to identify the specific tomb occupants.
- 55 To date, only a few hollow brick tombs have been found in Xi'an and its environs. In one Western Han tomb in Xianyang, the hollow bricks have a molded design showing the Four Directional Animals on a door frame. In a second tomb, the small bricks depicting the Four Directional Animals were found on both the walls and the ceiling, as were small bricks with molded geometric designs. In Luoyang, some hollow bricks had painted pictorial designs on them (e.g., Bu Qianqiu's tomb).
- 56 The Hunan tombs as a group are poorly dated. Near the tomb for Deng Jun are tombs dating to the first and fourteenth years of the Yongyuan reign period of Hedi, the Eastern Han emperor, judging by the inscriptions on the bricks. Probably the archaeologist dated this tomb based on its bricks with geometric designs and using the inscriptions from nearby tombs, but this kind of brick with geometric design was very common throughout the area we now call Hunan Province.
- 57 *Zhongguo wenwu ditu ji: Hunan fence* 1997, 150–80, esp. 150.
- 58 Du 2011.
- 59 *Hanshu* 94.3826.
- 60 *Hou Hanshu* 1B.78. The original excavation report referred to the number of Han tombs found in this area, after the time when most of the Han subjects had withdrawn. Moreover, the report did not say that this type of tomb was replaced by that of another culture. I have no further information on this issue thus far. I would like to say more about the rise and decline of what Yu Weichao calls the Core Han Culture, which Yu traced into Eastern Han, but this chapter focuses on the early stages of this dissemination process, the precise mechanisms of which are not always clearly understood.
- 61 Wei Jian 1998, 11–51.
- 62 Ge Jianxiong 1992, esp. 51.

6

The Residential Wards 理 of Western Han Chang'an

Zhang Jihai 张继海

(Translated by Jianye He 何剑叶)

K EY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE WARDS OF LATE WESTERN HAN Chang'an include their number, location, scale, and inner structure, which taken together might provide a sketch of the living conditions of ordinary, non-noble residents of Chang'an during that period. Many scholars, in researching these questions, have drawn upon archaeological artifacts (including excavated manuscripts on silk and bamboo) as well as works in the received literary tradition.¹ Some measure of consensus on a few crucial points has been reached, largely thanks to archaeological work at the city walls, city gates, markets, and palaces, whose placement and approximate layout are now relatively clear. Building on this solid basis, we can now conduct further research on Han Chang'an, moving beyond the old debates, which largely considered the markets and adjacent wards in Chang'an. This chapter chiefly focuses on the residential wards, a subject seldom explored in depth.² Starting with descriptions of Chang'an drawn from the "Western Metropolis" (*Xidu*) and "Western Capital" (*Xijing*) *fu*, poems ascribed to Ban Gu and Zhang Heng, respectively, this chapter utilizes the available evidence to sketch the location and typical layout of the wards in Chang'an, as well as what life may have been like in those wards.

It may prove helpful to review the range of sources about the wards, as scholars new to the field have sometimes been misled or limited by the sources on which they based their conclusions. The single most reliable source for Han historians is the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) compiled by Ban Gu (32–92 CE) and other members of his family. Almost

equally reliable are the two *fu* on the capital composed by Ban Gu and Zhang Heng, as these writers lived about a century after Western Han (206 BCE–9 CE), when large parts of the old capital were still standing, and they gave relatively comprehensive and systematic descriptions of Chang'an and its surroundings. Less reliable is the anonymous, third- or fourth-century (?) compilation *Sanfu huangtu* (*Plan of the Three Capital Regions*) and Li Daoyuan's early sixth-century *Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*, dated 527 CE). The *Three Capital Regions*, like the "Western Capital" *fu*, includes detailed descriptions of Chang'an. The problem is, the book has been "reconstructed" by later scholars, who collected their materials from sources both trustworthy and untrustworthy; therefore, independent verification is needed before using it as proof. The *Water Classic Commentary* came out relatively late, so the sources it cites may not be reliable.³ Excavations of relevant sites have the advantage of allowing us to revisit the material sites connected with historical scenes, but they have obvious limitations as well: if the remaining sites and their artifacts do not correspond well to the received texts, if the excavated site does not date to a time and place close to our sources, or if the archaeological record is deficient in some way (as it is almost invariably is), then we still must rely a great deal on the old textual sources. Fortunately, some of the excavated manuscripts on silk and on bamboo slips date from the period under consideration, so they can be consulted.

Inside the City Walls and Beyond

In the "Western Metropolis" *fu* Ban Gu provides a vivid description of Chang'an during the Western Han period:

They erected a metal fortress a myriad spans long,
Dredged the surrounding moat to form a gaping chasm,
Cleared broad avenues three lanes wide,
Placed twelve city gates for passage in and out.
Within, the city was pierced by roads and streets,
With ward gates (*lü*) and internal ward gates (*yan*), nearly a thousand.
In the nine *shi* [markets? districts?], they set up bazaars,
Their wares separate by type, their shop rows distinctly divided.
There was no room for people to turn their heads,
Or for chariots to wheel about.
People jammed into the city, spilled into the suburbs,
Everywhere streaming into the hundreds of shops,
Red dust churned up, accumulated everywhere;
Smoke blended with the clouds.
Thus, the people being both numerous and rich,
There was gaiety and pleasure without end.
The men and women of the capital were the most distinctive of the five regions.

.
 They joined in bands, gathered in groups,
 Raced and galloped within their midst.
 If then one gazes upon the surrounding suburbs,
 Travels to the nearby prefectures,
 Then to the south he may gaze on Du and Ba,
 To the north he may espy the Five Mausoleums,
 Where famous cities face Chang'an's outskirts,
 And towns and settlements connect one to another,
 It is the region of the prime and superior talents,
 Where sashes and hats of officials flourish.⁴

The opening part of this passage, with its descriptions of the walls and protective moat surrounding the city, the city gates, and the roads cutting through the city and exiting via the gates, closely tallies with the current archaeological record. In the middle of his description, Ban Gu tells of the roads, alleys, markets, and the people flourishing within the city walls; he describes wealth and luxury verging on the sybaritic (Fig. 6.01). By his account, goods and people overflowed in the capital, although the major granaries and warehouses were located outside the city walls. But modern readers should not be misled into thinking that this is a straightforward verbal portrait of the city Ban claimed to know. For example, the four-character phrase “the people being both numerous and rich,” applied to Western Han Chang’an, actually comes from Kongzi’s (Confucius’s) description of a well-run state,⁵ which by definition would have a flourishing population. Also, after the foregoing passage Ban Gu depicts the capital’s men and women as people who think themselves more sophisticated and powerful than the other subjects of the empire; this is moralizing, rather than straightforward reporting. The last part of Ban Gu’s *fu* turns to the densely populated suburbs beyond the capital city walls, chiefly the seven mausoleum towns located near the seven most impressive imperial tomb complexes at Duling and Baling (both southeast of the capital), and at the “Five Mausoleums” north of the Wei River, across from Chang’an. Before concluding his poem, Ban Gu turns to the networks of roads in the capital region, the population of the residential wards, the nine *shi*⁶ said to be located inside the city, and the relatively large number of people living outside Chang’an’s perimeter walls. Ban Gu also mentions the “hundred *chan*” (*baichan*), a term that clearly refers to the numerous smaller markets within the capital’s wall.

Let us now compare Western Han Chang’an as drawn in Zhang Heng’s “Western Capital” *fu*:

He [Xiao He] had the diameter and circumference measured,⁷
 And reckoned the length and breadth.
 They built the city walls and moat,

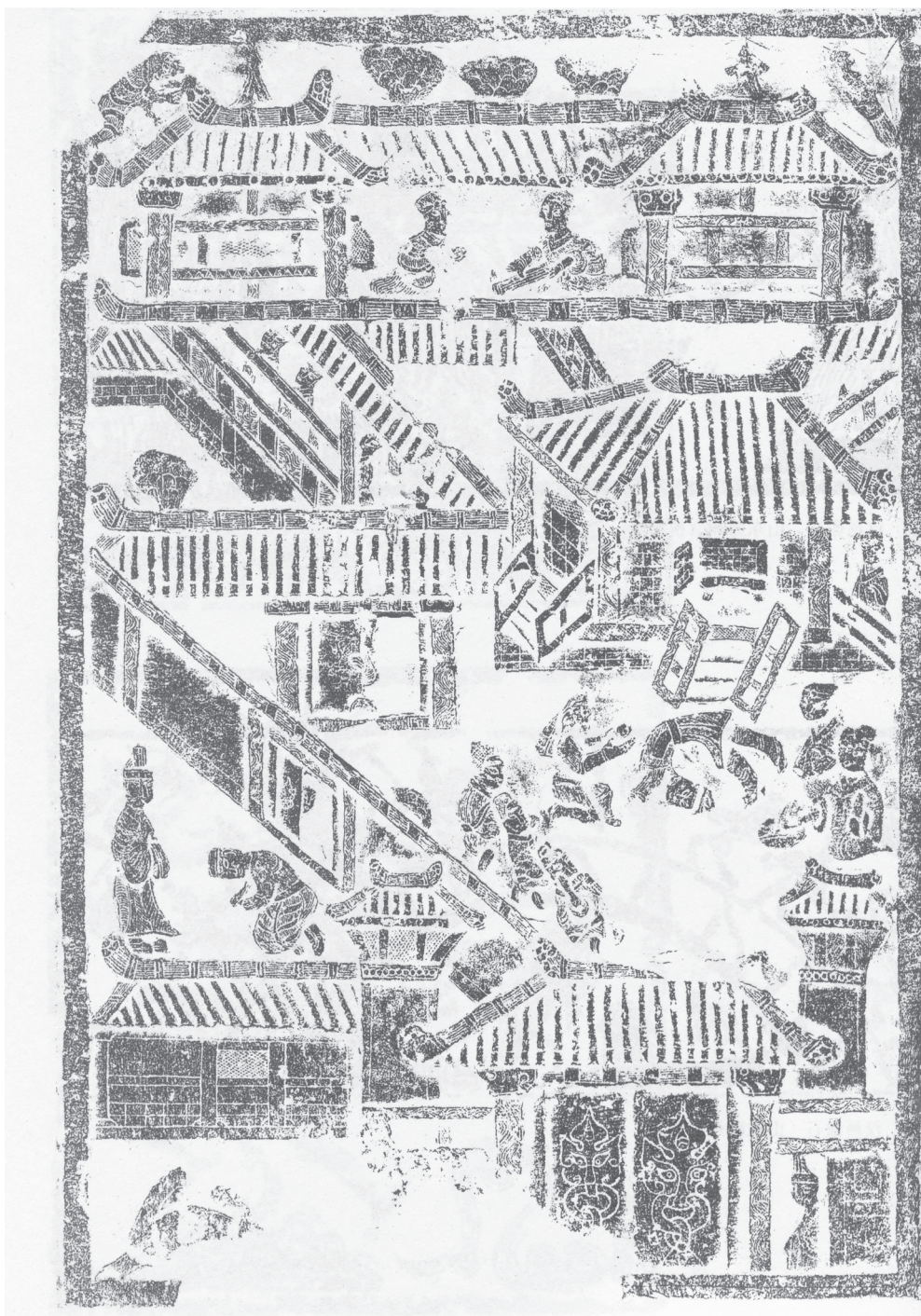


FIG. 6.01 Rubbing of a pictorial stone, showing life in a city ward, Eastern Han (ca. 100 CE). Stele size 116.5 cm x 78.5 cm. Discovered in Qufu Market, Guanzhen Old District. The stele is currently in the possession of the Qufu Kongmiao (Confucius Temple). The rubbing is in the possession of Michael Nylan.

Constructed the other enclosures.

.

Just look at the layout of the city walls—
On every side three city gates,
Each opening onto a three-lane imperial roadway, level and straight.
Running parallel were chariot tracks, twelve in number;
Streets and thoroughfares crossed one another.
The small markets and wards followed regular lines.
The tiled roofs were even and smooth.
The high-class residences by the Northern Watchtower
Opened directly to the road.

.

Except for Shi, except for Dong,
Who could dwell there?
And then:
They greatly expanded these nine *shi*,
Joined by encircling walls, gated with grillwork.
From the flag pavilions, five stories high,
Officials looked down to inspect the countless shop rows.

.

The knights-errant of the capital,
Men like Zhang and Zhao.

.

As for:
The itinerant persuaders of the five prefectures,
The masters of argument and disputation,
They discoursed in the streets, debated in the lanes,
Taking shots at the good and bad,
Within the suburbs and the royal domain.
The districts and towns were prosperous.
Merchandise from the Five Capitals
Was traded and collected in them.
Carts of traveling merchants, yoke abutting yoke,
Rumbled and rattled by.
The “caps-and-sashes” were seen throughout,
Their chariot shafts side by side, their crossbars touching.
The imperial domain of a thousand *li*
Was controlled by the Governor of the Capital.⁸

We can see from this passage that Zhang Heng described Western Han Chang'an in much the same order as Ban Gu: first appear the gates, streets, and wards; then

the markets, trade, and knights-errant; and finally the spaces and activities within the city perimeter walls and in the suburbs. In this sense, the two poems supplement each other. Note that when discussing the wards, only Ban Gu mentions the existence of “nearly one thousand ward gates” (i.e., *lǜ*) and internal ward gates (*yan*), whereas Zhang Heng more vividly portrays the orderliness of the wards’ layout (“The small markets and wards followed regular lines. / The tiled roofs were even and smooth.”) and takes pains to refer to the high-status mansions and provide more details about the rich and high-ranking suburban residents.

Chang’an’s 160 Wards

The first chapter of the six-chapter *Three Capital Regions* discusses the twelve city gates of the capital’s perimeter walls during Western Han; chapter 2, under four subheadings, discusses the nine *shi* of Western Han Chang’an, the eight thoroughfares and nine roads, the Chang’an wards, and the Han palaces. Much of the description in these two chapters follows the approach and typology of the two capital *fu*; all three sources, for example, indicate that the nine *shi*, eight thoroughfares, and nine roads were located within the city walls. Alone among these three sources, however, only the *Three Capital Regions* places its description of the nine *shi* before its discussion of the internal roadway system and the wards; and it alone specifies a total number of wards, 160. Notably, too, the *Three Capital Regions* adopts Zhang Heng’s language when celebrating the orderliness of the capital city layout and referring to the eight thoroughfares and nine roads.

The *History of the Han*’s “Treatise on Geography” gives 80,800 households as the total registered population of Western Han Chang’an in 2 CE.⁹ But scholars continue to debate whether the 160 wards specified by the *Three Capital Regions* could all fit *inside* the city’s perimeter walls. A group of well-respected scholars, doubting that so many wards could be fitted among those palaces, markets, and thoroughfares, would place at least some of these wards outside the city walls, especially in the suburbs to the north and the east. This group reasons that in the pre-Han era most early capitals comprised small inner cities (referring to the area within the first perimeter walls) and relatively bigger outer cities beyond that first set of walls. These scholars believe that the archaeological evidence suggests that Western Han Chang’an was an expanded palace city, containing elements of an inner city and possibly an outer city as well. Judging from the later cases of Luoyang, capital city during the Northern Wei (386–534 CE), and of Tang dynasty Chang’an (618–907 CE), typically between 500 and 600 (but sometimes up to 1,000) households could reside in a single neighborhood ward inside the city perimeter walls. As these scholars argue, if we assume comparable numbers for Western Han Chang’an, adopting a ratio of 500 households (*hu*) per ward, some of the 160 wards would have been located beyond the capital’s perimeter walls.¹⁰

This series of assumptions, however, is seriously flawed: according to both the

received literature and excavation reports, the typical Han city ward varied in size, as did the number of residences in a given ward; the larger wards probably held between 50 and 100 households, with the maximum number of households per ward seldom if ever exceeding 100.¹¹ While most scholars do not dispute those rough estimates, the scholars who follow the above reasoning argue that the capital city in all likelihood differed from other cities in the Han empire. Yes, there may have been differences between the capital city and other cities in the realm, but it is inconceivable that one Western Han ward (*li*) would ever have contained 500 households, even in the capital city.

A second group of scholars wonders whether the problem lies with the figure of 160 wards specified in the *Three Capital Regions* for Western Han Chang'an, since archaeologists have found so many large palace complexes in the south and middle sections of the capital city, not to mention the large markets in the north, the handicraft and industrial sites, and the mansions and official residences.¹² This second group reckons that only about one-third of the capital (whose total area inside the perimeter walls was 36 sq. km) had available land to house these 160 wards. But could the northernmost section measuring around 10 square kilometers ever have held most of the 160 wards? Any answer to that question depends on the size of the wards, needless to say. Zhou Changshan is perhaps the most prominent urban historian to try to calculate the size of an average ward, reckoning that a single household's residence occupied 70–80 square meters within the city walls. If we accept Zhou's figures, assuming roughly 100 households per ward, then 160 wards means 16,000 households. Using Zhou's calculations, we can then imagine fitting the 160 wards into one-third of the space in Chang'an city.¹³

A further complication arises when scholars presume (as does Wang Shejiao) that the capital city was arranged according to the "Kaogong ji" ("Record of Artisans") chapter in the *Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*), which stipulates 25 households per ward. Frankly speaking, this particular chapter may not even have existed when the capital at Chang'an was first built, as it is known to be a late addition to the *Rituals of Zhou*, a classic not cited, judging from the extant texts, until late Western Han (i.e., nearly two centuries afterward).¹⁴ But let us follow Wang's reasoning a bit more. Wang assumes, based on a figure derived from the Nanbeichao (420–589 CE), that a standard lot for a family of three was 1 *mu* of land, where 1 Han *mu* equals about 465 square meters. Of course, the many noble residences in Chang'an city would have been far larger, and Wang estimates that the mansions, on average, occupied roughly 5 *mu* (some 2,300 square meters); 25 such households making up a single residential ward would mean that this type of ward occupied about 57,500 square meters. Assuming all wards to be more or less the same size, Wang's calculations yield a figure of roughly 9.2 square kilometers needed for the total of 160 wards occupied. Western Han Chang'an would, by this set of linked assumptions, have had enough space to accommodate the 160 wards comfortably within the 10 square kilometers bounded by the northern section of the city walls. (As Wang is of the opinion that most non-noble families could not have afforded to live within Chang'an proper, he omits smaller residences in his calculations.)¹⁵

Another figure that comes into play in some scholars' accounts is the somewhat puzzling reference to the *Miaoji* (*Temple Record*) cited in the *Three Capital Regions*, which states that the nine *shi* in Chang'an were each 266 paces square, and that in general 4 *li* (either "ward" or "district" as a unit of area roughly equivalent to 414 m) made up one *shi*, making the total number of *shi* 36 (9 by 4) wards. Calculations based on the *Temple Record* would then be as follows:

266 paces=367.08 m

266 sq. paces=134,748 sq. m or 0.1347 sq. km

If *shi* means "market" (discussed below), it is entirely relevant that recent excavations have shown the surface area of Chang'an's Eastern Market in the city's northern section to be 0.5265 square kilometers, even though some scholars (such as Meng Fanren) deem this area too small. Setting that problem aside for the moment, if we accept the *Temple Record* account that 266 square paces made up the (presumably average) single Chang'an ward, the 160 wards together would have occupied roughly 21.5 square kilometers. But this figure cannot be right, because Western Han Chang'an, after the palaces and markets and thoroughfares are considered, had only about 15 square kilometers that could be used for residential wards; so only 110 wards of 266 square paces could fit within the city perimeter walls. Of course, wards of varying sizes may have coexisted within Western Han Chang'an, both at the time of its construction and later on. Perhaps the apparently precise number of 160 wards is only an approximation, then.¹⁶

To sum up, three groups of scholars, headed by three leading experts, arrive at stunningly different sums for the area of the Western Han capital wards: the first group (led by Zhou Changshan) proposes only 1.2 square kilometers; the second group (led by Wang Shejiao), 9.2 square kilometers (roughly one-third of the city); the third group (led by Meng Fanren), 15 square kilometers, while this last group also surmises that 21.5 square kilometers would have been needed to fit 160 wards inside the city's perimeter walls.

Quite confusingly, as readers will recall, a single term *li* designates a measure of length and also a unit of area (an entire city ward or a country hamlet). As for the notion that 4 *li* were equal to 1 *shi* (which most read as "market," adopting the usual sense of that word), a famous commentator to the *Three Capital Regions* adds the gloss that 1 *li* during the Han dynasty measured about 414 modern meters; thus 4 *li* would be roughly 1,656 meters in length, and 4 square *li* would occupy about 337,000 square meters. If we then take a city ward (a *li*) to signify the *area* measuring approximately 4 square *li*, a single ward in Chang'an should ordinarily have been large enough to accommodate both the markets and the spaces between them.¹⁷ Since we have an early figure measuring the perimeter walls of Western Han Chang'an (which talks of 12 *li* altogether), we could work with the notion that 4 *li* equals 1 *shi*, dividing the city into nine spatial units

of equal size called *shi*, thus making *shi* a measure word for a large area or “district” further subdivided into wards—wards that were, possibly, served by a single market.¹⁸ By this set of figures, the arrangement of the nine *shi* in Western Han Chang’an would look like the diagram in Figure 6.02.

Such suppositions all make eminently good sense. Unfortunately, they do not tally with the archaeological discoveries relating to Western Han Chang’an. Moreover, they seem to directly contradict the “Record of Artisans” statement that “the court is in front, and the markets behind,” though I have already in this chapter registered my reason for doubting the prevailing assumption that this text exerted a major influence on the capital layout. I believe that we can interpret the *Temple Record* in another sense: that the size or surface area of 1 *shi* was equal to that of 4 *li* (wards).

Certainly, at this remove we cannot know whether each and every ward in Western Han Chang’an was actually 266 square paces. But archaeology does provide the area of the two major markets east and west of Heng City Gate Street in northwest Chang’an: the Eastern Market measured 780 by 650–700 meters, yielding a total area of 0.5265 square kilometer; while the Western Market measured 550 by 420–80 meters, or 0.2475 square kilometer.¹⁹ Two things are important to note: first, the two markets varied considerably in size; and second, neither market approximated 266 paces per side, or a total area of 0.1347 square kilometer. Sadly, we have no more accurate way to calculate the size of the market areas, nor do we have many further details about the two markets. The archaeological record shows only that two roads oriented east–west and two roads oriented north–south ran through the two markets, and that those four roads crossed one another and subdivided each of these two markets into several sections.²⁰ We do not know, therefore, whether each individual section within each market was relatively independent (perhaps its own ward?), with its own name. Lacking more complete archaeological evidence at present, we are forced back on the *Three Capital Regions* account to glean further information.

As readers will recall, the *Three Capital Regions* says that 4 *li* equals 1 *shi*, and each *li* ought to be about 337,000 square meters. If *li* means “ward” here, then 160 wards ought to occupy roughly 5.4 square kilometers. But this calculation only accounts for the wards themselves and not the wide spaces given over to the roads and thoroughfares

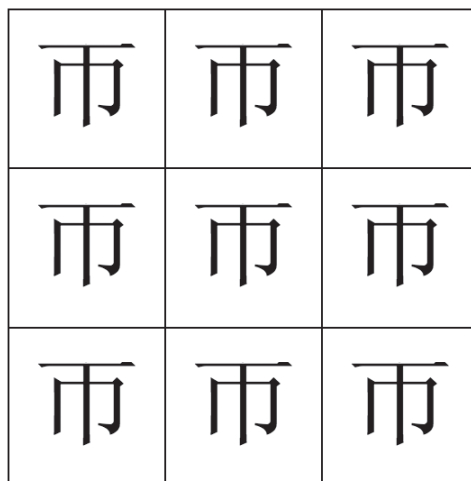


FIG. 6.02 Diagram of the Nine Districts; each square represents 1 *shi*, as a spatial unit. According to the *Temple Record*, the surface area of 1 *shi* equaled that of 4 *li* (wards). Drawn by the author.

placed between wards. Adding in that space for the roads, the area occupied by the wards might have totaled as much as 6–7 square kilometers. Thus, even though most of Western Han Chang'an was taken up by palaces, official residences, markets, and roads and thoroughfares, between 10 and 12 square kilometers must have been left for residential space, judging from the current archaeological record. If that is true, then 160 wards occupying 5.4 kilometers could fit easily within this remaining space, even if we concede the probability that some wards were built on a far grander scale than others.

If all the figures adduced above are correct, we can safely conclude that Western Han Chang'an's 160 wards could all fit neatly within the city perimeter walls, with a heavy concentration of such walls in the northeast section, to the north and south of Xuanping Gate Thoroughfare. They would probably have stretched from Qingming Gate Thoroughfare in the north to east of the Kitchen Gate Thoroughfare in the east.

Within the Wards: "Thousand Wards and Internal Gates"

One modern gloss to the *Three Capital Regions* reads, "The houses [inside the Chang'an wards] were crowded against each other like the teeth of a wooden comb, and the alleyways were long and straight,"²¹ a statement stressing the narrowness of the lanes within the wards.

In his authoritative study of early Chinese capitals, Yang Kuan provided a systematic study of the wards in the pre-Han period,²² proposing that each pre-Han ward had a single road running through it and a gate to the outside, also that the administrative officers supervising the ward activities were called either ward directors (*lidian*) or ward prefects (*lizheng*).²³ By Yang's account, each pre-Han ward had a guard stationed at the entry gate, and each pre-Han ward usually held 50–100 households. The Western Han wards inherited the residential ward system from pre-unification times, so residents were expected to live inside the walled wards, and the single entry gate to each Han ward, called *li*, served as an administrative checkpoint from which there issued a single road or lane running the entire length of the ward. Urban historians and archaeologists have devised no fewer than three competing theories about the specific forms taken by the Han ward, but all three theories presume that the wards were narrow rectangles in shape, rather than squares.²⁴ Two chapters from the *Guanzi* entitled "Eight Watch-towers" and "Establishing Good Rule" are cited as proof of this,²⁵ and those chapters certainly seem plausible, given the perceived need to ensure the security of the wards by internal policing.

But were these narrow wards oriented north–south or east–west? Miyazaki Ichisada (1901–1995 CE) assumed that the rectangular wards ran north–south and that each ward had one gate at both ends, north and south.²⁶ Miyazaki also posited the existence of a third gate (called *yan*) positioned at the midpoint along the single road running through the middle of each ward. By contrast, Satō Taketoshi (b. 1920), envisioned wards that measured 266 paces east–west and 66.5 paces north–south—a series of very

long, very narrow rectangles.²⁷ Surely, there is no need to imagine only one shape and orientation for all the wards in every Western Han city,²⁸ including the capital. After all, the Western Han empire ruled a territory no less vast than the Roman empire, and different climates and topography meant different customs in different parts of the Western Han empire, making both east–west and north–south orientations for the wards probable in some urban areas.

The main evidence for narrow wards oriented north–south comes from *Chunqiu fanlu* (*Elegant Crown for the Annals*), a largely post-Han work attributed to Dong Zhongshu (ca. 179–104 BCE). The chapters devoted to seeking and stopping rain advise that one method of controlling rainfall is to open or shut the southern or northern gate of a ward. In addition, the excavated Juyan strips from Gansu provide fairly detailed information about Han wards, at least at the northwest frontiers. From those Juyan strips we know that the majority of the northwest frontier–zone wards were oriented north–south, perhaps to maximize sunlight. Among a great many Juyan materials, four are particularly relevant:

1. Zhang Gongzi's place is located in Lude [city], Fu Ward. Taking the second door after entering the ward, one then goes into the ward in an easterly direction.
2. Bao's house is located in Juyan. Taking the fifth door, one enters the ward, going in an eastwardly direction.
3. Fang Zihui's place is located in Lude city, Anding Ward. For the residence, one goes to the upper of the three [city] gates, entering the third door in the second ward in an eastwardly direction.
4. Guo Zhijun's place is located in Lude city, Changdu Ward. In the residential ward, at the house on the east, one enters into the ward going in a southern direction.²⁹

The commentator glosses *men* (usually “gate” or “door”) as either “gate of the ward” or the street number of a household,³⁰ which is both inconsistent and unconvincing. But even this small collection of four strips is thought by some to support the conclusion that residents' doors within a ward were numbered in order, as they are today.³¹ That said, we must not confuse the problem of the orientations of individual *households within a ward* and the orientation of the *wards as the larger residential units*. As it happens, the subjects of these Juyan strips are the residents of Lude or Juyan who bought cloth or swords on account from the frontier garrison depositories. The addresses of the buyers had to be as precise as possible, so that the seller (a government representative?) could easily find them in case of default. The four above records mention three wards of Lude city (Fu, Anding, and Changdu), with the first two oriented north–south and the third east–west.

Mention of wards oriented east–west occurs in both the received literature and stone inscriptions. For example, Ying Shao's *Fengsu tongyi* (*Comprehensive Discussion of Customs*, comp. before 203 CE) includes an anecdote concerning a girl pursued by

two young men, one living to the east and the second to the west of her home,³² suggesting that the ward inhabited by the three families was oriented east–west and was probably narrow. A stele from late Eastern Han tells of a sacrifice offered at the temple erected to Kongzi in Queli (present-day Qufu, Shandong), during the reign of Han Lingdi (r. 168–189 CE), and the renovation of a nearby ward. The temple complex had a wide road running through it, and, given the description of a ditch oriented east–west, we can surmise that the alleyways there also ran east–west.³³ Additionally, we know that at least a few of the wards in Western Han Chang'an were oriented east–west. The *History of the Han* biography of Wang Ji, for example, mentions his wife picking dates from the tree whose roots were planted on the property of the house to the east.³⁴ And a second piece of evidence concerning the Academicians' dormitories in Chang'an indirectly supports the same conclusion.³⁵ From this second piece of evidence, we can surmise that wards with an east–west orientation were probably more popular in Western Han Chang'an, as well as in Eastern Han Luoyang.

Returning to Satō's theory that wards tended to be 266 paces long east–west and 66.5 paces long north–south, in present-day measurements that means a ward 367 meters east–west and 92 meters north–south, or, rounding down, an average ward measuring 360 by 90 meters. If the single road running the length of the ward was about 10 meters wide (including space for a ditch on either side), then each residential plot (*qu*) would *on average* occupy roughly 40 square meters—an area that is still quite large—though it is likely that each ward had bigger and smaller houses within it, and so more houses or fewer.

But if we believe that a single high-status household might occupy most or nearly all of a single residential ward, then we have to start imagining overcrowding in some other wards.³⁶ The *History of the Han's Basic Annals* for Pingdi, the last Western Han ruler, mentions his court commissioning five wards to be built in the city center for the poor, having two hundred *zhai*, an ill-defined term referring either to “separate residences” or “residential plots” where more than one family resided. If *qu* means “residential plots,” as seems almost certain, within each ward the number of residential plots (and hence the number of households and residents) would have varied greatly, depending on whether the house built on each residential plot belonged to the poor or the rich and titled. In theory, a single residential plot occupying an entire ward could exist, without contravening the basic calculations that most scholars begin with; in theory, too, such a plot could occupy more than 600 square meters—an area large enough to accommodate not only a small house, granary, and shed for domestic animals but also a small orchard. (Several Han anecdotes portray local magnates cultivating their orchards.)³⁷

As Chang'an was the capital during Western Han, some of its residential plots for high officials and nobles might well have been larger than those in other cities, even if most people living within the perimeter walls of Chang'an city were probably of mid-dling status. Based on the sources we can now survey, however, the city was not yet

completely commercialized in the modern sense of the word, since the Han administration typically determined who could or could not reside within the Chang'an wards, if a residence had not been inherited within a local family. The decision by the members of Pingdi's court to accommodate poor people in wards within the city was a sign of this. And because the residents mentioned in connection with this initiative are specifically identified as the urban *poor*, 10 or more such households could have been established on residential plot of some 600 square meters, which means that two hundred residential plots could house perhaps as many as 2,000–3,000 separate impoverished households.

If Chang'an had 160 wards, and each ward had one main road with a single row of houses on each side of it, then how could Ban Gu speak of "ward gates and internal gates numbering nearly a thousand"? To answer that question requires a somewhat lengthy explanation. First, we must refer to the authoritative *Shuowen jiezi zhu* (*Explications of Words and Phrases*), which defined *lǜ* clearly as "ward gate" for entering and exiting the wards.³⁸ For "the gates *inside* a ward," the *Explications* gives the character read as *yan*. Unfortunately, the gloss offered by the commentator Duan Yucai (1735–1815 CE) makes the word *yan* liable to two constructions: either any internal gate *within* the ward, or the *middle* gate(s) (*zhongmen*) in a given ward. Miyazaki, among others, presumes the latter construction, citing a *History of the Han* passage describing a dispatch of soldiers to the frontier from "left of the *lǜ*" or "left in the *lǜ*" (both are possible translations of the phrase *lǜ zuo*).³⁹ But others (e.g., Zhou Changshan) doubts Miyazaki's interpretation, believing that the term *yan* only denotes the gates of residences *within* the wards.⁴⁰ Miyazaki's "reconstruction" would leave us with 480 *yan* "middle gates" within the ward, plus an unknown number of gates leading into each of the 160 wards, a number hardly likely to add up a thousand. By contrast, "reconstructions" like Zhou Changshan's would leave us with far too many gates, nearly 10,000 *yan* and ward gates altogether. Unhappily, the former seems too few and the latter far too many.

That *yan* must mean "internal gates within the ward" can be gleaned from a chapter in the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*) that tells of a Metropolitan Commissioner (Neishi) who when drunk failed to descend from his chariot when entering a ward through an outside ward gate; that the anecdote had to specify an "outside ward gate" makes it clear that there were *inside* gates in the ward.⁴¹ There is more. As we know, residents of the city wards by the mid-fourth century BCE were organized into units by the centralizing states. Some households were organized into units of five and ten; hence the expression *shiwu* (literally, "fives or tens"), usually translated "rank and file." Figuring that each city ward on average held roughly 50 households, then a single ward might conceivably have had as many as four internal gates or *yan* separating the ward into five separate zones, each comprising ten families on average, with five household plots on either side of the single road running through the ward. Therefore, contra Zhou Changshan, this *yan* cannot refer to the gates leading into individual residences; it must rather refer to a gate located on the very lane that ran through a ward. But because of the probable

variation in the sizes of residential plots within different wards, it would be foolhardy to settle on only one figure for the number of internal gates or *yan* within a ward. A late Eastern Han gloss on a passage in the *Gongyang* (a commentarial tradition to the *Annals*) speaks of eight families sharing a single alleyway.⁴² If we follow that gloss, we might imagine roughly 80 households per ward, with each ward divided into five sections defined by four internal gates, with each of the five sections having sixteen families, eight on either side of the lane running the length of the city ward, through the middle.

Armed with this new set of numbers, we may return to the specific case, shortly after the reign of Chengdi, during the reign of Pingdi, when the court created forty residential plots in five wards for the poor, according to the *History of the Han*. For Pingdi's forty plots, we might imagine a ward whose center lane is interrupted in three places, with "internal gates" impeding or allowing movement through the city wards. These three walls spanning the lane, each with its own gate, would then divide each ward into four separate sections. Taken together, two hundred plots would also yield a total of something like 640 or 800 ward gates and section gates altogether, a figure that tallies well enough with Ban Gu's talk of 1,000 internal gates.

Based on the discussion above, we can draw the plan of a typical Western Han Chang'an ward as in Figure 6.03. The plan shows an average ward running 360 meters east-west and 90 meters north-south, with the ward lane 10 meters wide; each of the hypothetical households occupies a space roughly 18 by 40 meters; and three internal gates (*yan*) within each ward, make a total of four roughly equal sections. Such a plan therefore allows 6,400 households or so to represent the population within the Chang'an wards. That figure is certainly too low, given that the Han *fu* characterize the city wards as very crowded, even if the rich and high-ranking had more spacious residences; moreover the 2 CE register is not a true census but simply a register of tax-paying individuals.⁴³ But adding something like 7,000 households from Chang'an city proper to the 75,000 registered households thought to reside in Chang'an county shortly after 2 CE, we arrive at a sum surprisingly close to the 80,800 households given in the tax register of 2 CE for "Chang'an."⁴⁴ While this may be sheer coincidence, it is to date the most plausible explanation we have for the total population of late Western Han Chang'an city and county, excluding the nearby mausoleum towns, which were themselves huge centers of population.

Arrangement and Directionality of the Chang'an Wards and the Phrase "Left of the Lü"

The *Falü dawen* (*Questions on the Laws and Statutes*) bamboo strips excavated from Shuihudi include a passage defining an encircling wall (*yuan*), so that judges may determine when crossing a barrier constitutes a criminal act: "With regard to crossing a wall that divides one ward from another. Is, then, the wall to be considered an encir-

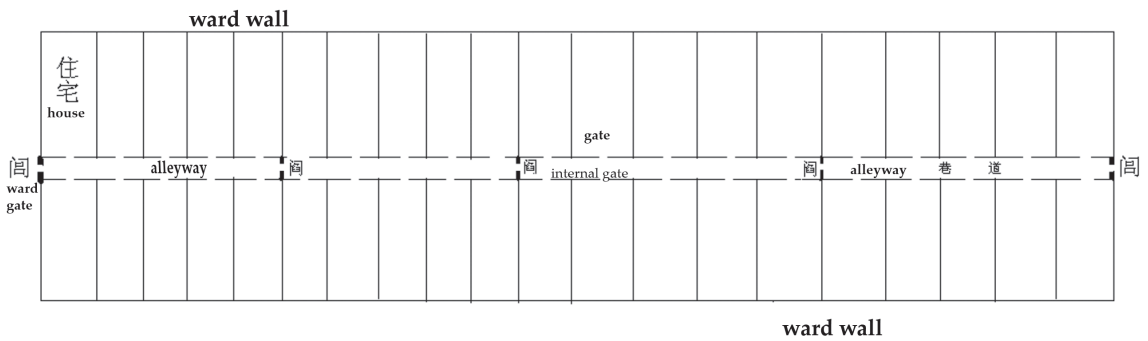


FIG. 6.03 A hypothetical Chang'an city ward with ward gates (*liu*), internal gates (*yan*), forty residential units (*zhuzhai*), and a ward road/alley (as during Pingdi's reign). An average Chang'an ward, according to this reconstruction, would have been 360 by 90 meters. Drawn by the author.

cling wall or not? [Answer:] When neighboring houses directly face one across a lane (*xiang xiang zhi*), [crossing from one house to the next] is deemed to be [crossing over] an encircling wall. But when the two houses are directly opposite one another within a space (?) (*yu xiang zhi*), [then crossing from one house to the next] is not considered [crossing over] an encircling wall.⁴⁵

Say we have two residences belonging to two different wards named A and B. If A and B are separated from each another by a wall—a wall not identified as an “encircling” wall or *yuan*—a person crossing that wall to get from one residence to the other does not commit a serious crime. Let us now take a second set of hypothetical locations, this time named B and C (see Figure 6.03): if B and C are separated, not only by a wall, but also by a lane running between two great thoroughfares, the outer ward walls that face other ward walls *are* considered “encircling” walls, and so a person crossing over the walls would be committing a very serious crime.

Following the Shuihudi passage, we could consider a fairly typical case in which a relatively narrow ward is oriented east–west, like several nearby wards. Assume that some of the walls are boundaries between different ward units. Even if A and B are neighbors, and the roof tiles of the houses in A ward face those of B ward, then the wall separating A from B is not “encircling.” The implication of the law cited in the Shuihudi document suggests tight control over the ward, since only one entry gate was typically used, even when two entry gates existed. So if a person living at a distance from the one entry-exit gate in use was to cut through his neighbor's property for the sake of convenience, the crime was deemed more serious if it involved crossing walls that separated one lane from another. How much more serious, then, was the crime and punishment meted out to the person who crossed over the wall marking an end of the ward and facing a main thoroughfare?

In any case, if we assume that four wards make up a single spatial unit (a district or *shi*), then what kind of city would Western Han Chang'an be? Let us try fitting

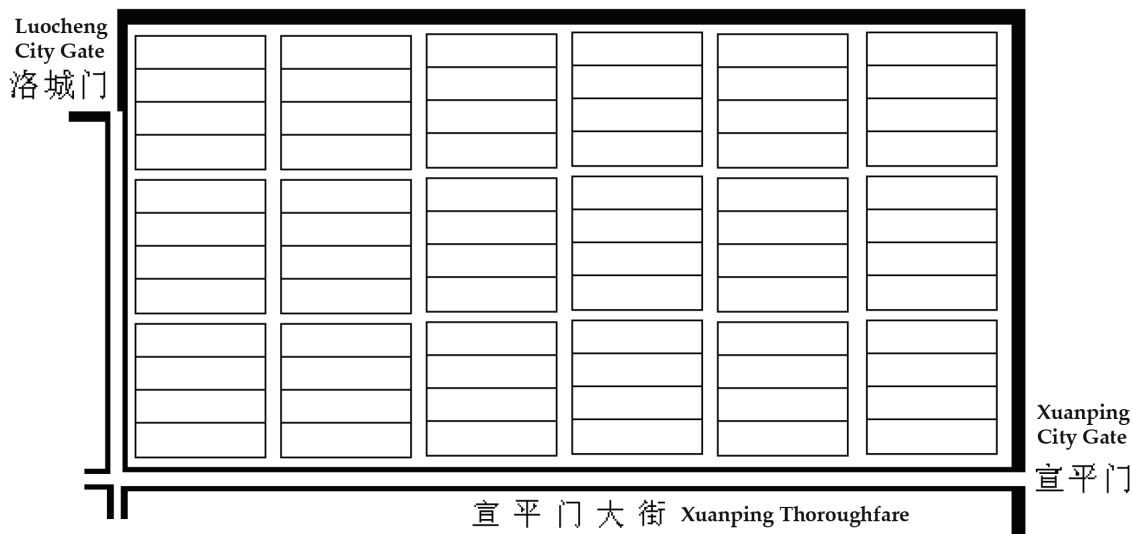


FIG. 6.04 Hypothetical reconstruction of wards (arranged in blocks of four) and intersecting roads in the northeastern sector of Chang'an city, between Xuanping City Gate on the east side and Luo City Gate on the north side. Drawn by the author.

these blocks of four wards (equivalent to a single *shi*) onto the northeastern sector of Chang'an city, whose main contours have been determined by recent excavations (Fig. 6.04).

Generally speaking, the length of a ward was around four times its width, though we know variations were possible. The early sources supply precise figures for the distance from Xuanping City Gate, in the southeast corner, to the northeast corner of the Chang'an city walls (1,150 m); also for the distance from the Luo City Gate, in the upper northwest, to the northeast corner of the Chang'an city walls (2,500 m).⁴⁶ Probably such distances would have allowed Chang'an to have six "districts," or *shi*, running east-west across the northern sector, with major thoroughfares (each about 40 m wide) clearly demarcating the boundaries of the six spatial units (*shi*). The layout given in Figure 6.04 is obviously both an approximation and an idealization, since the size of wards varied, but at least the layout shown is consistent with the evidence we have and also with the equation that makes 4 wards equal to a city district. So this drawing showing 18 such spatial units (i.e., city districts), or 72 walled wards (figuring 4 wards, or *shi*), suits our purposes well enough for now. If we add in other wards scattered around the capital city (for example, the wards south of Xuanping Gate Thoroughfare), we can see that Chang'an might have accommodated 160 wards at one time, with each ward having only a single official ward gate (*zhengmen*), no matter which direction the ward faced.

Nevertheless, for a long time scholars have been diligently trying to determine which direction most Chang'an wards most likely faced. Different scholars have weighed in

with different opinions about the orientation of Chang'an and, indeed, whether there was a single or a shifting orientation during Western Han.⁴⁷ Yang Kuan, the senior urban historian, has repeatedly stressed that the "heart" of Chang'an city lay in the Weiyang Palace, in the southwest quadrant, also that the most important gates of that palace faced north and east,⁴⁸ with both directions having a single massive towergate. Whereas officials entered for court audiences via the Northern Towergate, the princes and nobles came into the palace through the Eastern Towergate, presumably because so many kingdoms were clustered in the eastern part of the empire. The scholarly consensus up to now has held that the most important city gates were in the capital's two northernmost corners: on the east at Xuanping City Gate, and on the west at Heng City Gate, facing the Weiyang Palace's Northern Towergate, which led directly to the imperial mausoleum towns over a bridge spanning the Wei River. Scholars also agree that the northwestern counties near the mausoleum towns represented the most important concentrations of power and wealth in the Chang'an suburbs for most of Western Han, all the more so because of the need to defend against the Xiongnu threat in the northwest.⁴⁹ All this increased the traffic and the perceived significance of the roads running east-west, so many wards in the middle and southern sections of the city probably ran east-west as well. However, as the northern section of Chang'an city lay at a relatively low elevation, compared to other parts of the city, most traffic there would have been oriented toward the Wei River and Heng City Gate, so it is likely that a majority of the northern wards would have been oriented north-south, with a ward gate opening to the north.

The hypothesis that the ward gates in Western Han Chang'an generally faced east or north helps us interpret the binomial phrase "left of the ward gate" (*lǚ zuo*), which has puzzled so many scholars. During the empires of Qin and Western Han, the right consistently ranked higher than the left in ritual and in administrative titles.⁵⁰ One suspects, then, that "left of the ward gate" refers to relatively poor and low-status people. If rich and poor, high and low ranking, lived in the same narrow ward oriented east-west, those with power and wealth would naturally choose sites for their houses in the northern part of the ward (i.e., to the right of the ward gate), since such houses would, all other things being equal, enjoy more sunlight and quite possibly mean closer access to the entry and exit gates of the ward. And within the northern section of any given ward, houses sited in the west would enjoy more sunlight in winter and less glare in the harsh summers, so long as they faced east. We suspect, then, that the Qin emperor's dispatch of people to the northwestern frontier garrisons drew from those "left of the ward gates" precisely because these residents were comparatively powerless to protest.

Life in the Wards

It is somewhat discouraging to think how little we know about how life was lived in the Chang'an residential wards. Only a few scattered anecdotes portray unofficial events in

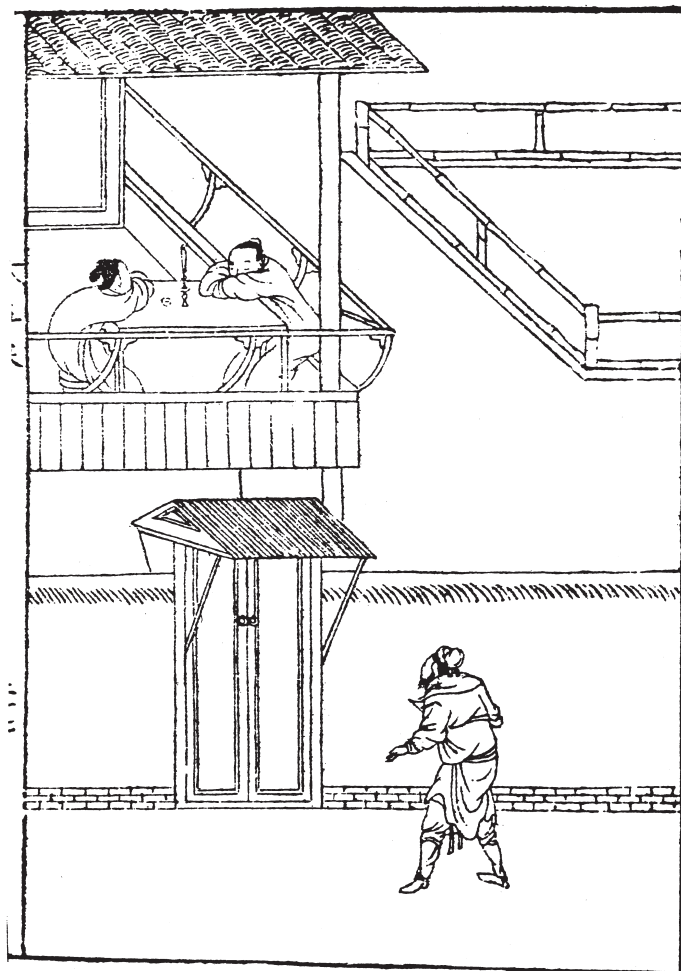


FIG. 6.05 Ming woodblock illustration of Liu Xiang's story about the "woman of principle." From Huang Jiayu's 1606 edition of *Gu Lienüzhuàn*, with carvings by Huang Hao; reproduced from Ma and Chen 2003, 285.

the lives of the governing elite who are chronicled in the standard histories, usually to celebrate their virtues or deplore their vices. And we have but one or two marvelous pictorial representations (Fig. 6.05; also see Fig. 6.01).

One of the most interesting anecdotes, especially for those interested in gender history, concerns an unnamed "woman of principle" living in a Chang'an ward, whose fame lived on in history:

The so-called woman of principle from the capital was the wife of a man of Dachang Ward⁵¹ in Chang'an. This man had an enemy who wanted to take revenge on him, but the would-be avenger had been unable to figure out how to do this. As soon as the enemy learned how well the wife did her duty, in all humaneness and filial piety, he abducted her father, so that the old man would have his daughter to do his bidding.

The old man [who was kidnapped] indeed informed his daughter of what

had happened. The woman pondered her dilemma, thinking, “If I disobey my father, I will be responsible for my father’s death, which is unfilial. At the same time, if I obey my father, I will be responsible for my husband’s death, which would be undutiful. How am I to go on living, if I am either unfilial or undutiful?”

Resolved to act, she ostensibly agreed to help her husband’s enemy, saying, “Tomorrow night, my husband will come home to wash his hair,⁵² and he will lie down to sleep in the tower room. He will be the one facing east. In anticipation of your visit, I will open the windows and the doors there.” She then went back home and persuaded her husband to sleep elsewhere, after which she washed her own hair and settled herself in the upstairs tower room. There she opened the doors and windows, and she lay down facing the east. In the middle of the night, her husband’s enemy arrived. He cut off her head and carried it away with him [as a prize]. Only when he took a look at the head in daylight did he discover that it was the wife’s head, in point of fact. Feeling immense contrition and sorrow for her, the enemy concluded that she was indeed a woman of principle, and because of that he resolved not to kill her husband.⁵³

From this anecdote we can conclude that certain residences of the well-to-do in the city wards had tower rooms located above a first floor.

A second anecdote concerns Yu Dingguo, a man celebrated for his virtue and erudition, who eventually rose to the position of Chancellor under Chengdi’s father and whose son married an imperial princess:

Earlier, when Yu Dingguo’s father was still alive, the gate to the residential ward where he and his family lived fell into disrepair. When the elders of the community convened a meeting to plan how they might supervise its repair, Yu Dingguo’s father said, “Make the ward gate tall enough to admit a team of four horses with a high-topped carriage. When deciding criminal cases, I have performed many kindnesses without letting others know of them, and I’ve never inflicted an injustice upon anyone. My sons and grandsons are bound to come up in the world [thanks to my record].” As it turned out, Yu Dingguo became Chancellor, and *his* son Yu Yong became Imperial Counsellor [second-in-command of the administration, under Chengdi], and the noble line they established passed down generation after generation.⁵⁴

Several features of this story are noteworthy, particularly the assumption that Yu Dingguo and his son would remain living in their father’s old residence in the capital ward after their elevation to high official ranks with noble titles.

A third anecdote also supplies a few details relating to life in the wards during the short reign of Chengdi’s successor:

Once some people prepared wine and invited Yuan She over to their house. Yuan [who was widely admired in Chang'an] had no sooner entered the ward gate than one of his followers told him that the mother of someone he knew had taken ill and, in hopes of escaping contagion, had been moved to a house in the same ward he was visiting. He went immediately to knock at the gate of that family, and when he heard the family wailing, he entered to offer his condolences. When he asked about the funeral arrangements and learned that the family was in straitened circumstances, he said, "Just sweep up and wash things, bathe the body, and wait for me." Next he returned to the house where he was to be entertained and said to his followers with a sigh, "That man's mother is lying on the ground without a proper burial. What heart have I to face a banquet? Please take the food and wine away!" At that his followers rushed forward to ask what they could do to help. Yuan She then moved off his mat, in a gesture of mourning, and seated himself on the floor. He proceeded to cut a number of writing slips and to write up orders for all the necessary items, from clothing, bedding, and the coffin down to such things as food and the jade stopper piece for the mouth. He distributed these among his retainers, who hurried off to the market to make the purchases.

By the time the sun was beginning to set, they had all reassembled [with their purchases], and, after Yuan She had personally inspected the items, he told his host that he would appreciate having some refreshments. He and his followers then joined in the eating and drinking, but Yuan She for his part was careful not to gorge himself. Afterward, he took the coffin along with the other items and, accompanied by his followers, he went to the bereaved family and prepared the body for burial, all the while comforting and encouraging the others, until the funerary arrangements were completed. This is an example of how he helped others and treated other people.⁵⁵

Only a rudimentary sense of contagion is clear from this anecdote, but this story could not be clearer when it comes to specifying the sort of conduct that won Yuan She his fine reputation, despite his clients' less humane conduct. As scholars of the early China field gather more and more anecdotes about life in the wards for elites and nonelites, we may slowly build a better picture of urban life in Western Han Chang'an.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Taken together, the received literature, recent excavations, and several secondary studies support eight major points, recapitulated below.

Many facts about Western Han Chang'an can be gleaned from descriptions in the *fu* poems by Ban Gu and Zhang Heng, which portray numerous wards, the nine *shi* (spatial units or districts), and the placement of major roads within the Chang'an layout.

A comparison of the *Three Capital Regions* with the earlier Han capital *fu* supports several conclusions, chief among them that late Western Han Chang'an had 160 wards; that the area occupied by those 160 wards was about 5.4 square kilometers; and that the total area of the wards, plus the thoroughfares between them, would have totaled about 6–7 square kilometers.

The wards in Western Han Chang'an were probably narrow rectangles whose length-to-width ratio was about 4:1. An east–west orientation almost certainly prevailed in the southern and middle sections of the city. On average, each residence with house and gardens occupied an area of about several hundred square meters.

The standard gate by which to enter and exit a ward was called *lü*. A single long lane would have run through any typical ward, with the houses of the residents flanking the lane on both sides. Along this lane inside the ward, there could exist internal barriers with internal ward gates called *yan*; sometimes several barriers, and hence several *yan*, divided the space inside a ward. Altogether, in Western Han Chang'an there were supposedly about a thousand of the two types of gates, external and internal (*lü* and *yan*).

Households grouped by fives or by tens made up the core administrative units mandated for the ward residents.

From the shapes and layouts of these wards, as specified in a few early sources, we can construct a conceptual map showing the arrangement of some seventy wards in the northern sector of the city, bounded by two thoroughfares, Xuanping Gate Thoroughfare and Luocheng Gate Thoroughfare. If we then factor in the basic topography of Western Han Chang'an, as well as traditional ideas about directionality that were still current in Han, it seems that most ward gates probably faced east in the southern and middle sections of the capital city, though a majority of those in the north may have faced north. This presumption can help us to understand, in turn, the somewhat puzzling connotations of the phrase “left of the *lü*,” as noted above.

There remains the thorny problem of the approximate number of registered households residing in late Western Han Chang'an city and county: even if we can accept that a high proportion of the registered population for Chang'an (perhaps as many as 75,000 households of the more than 80,000 registered households, as argued above) lived in Chang'an county—that is, in the suburbs outside the perimeter walls of the capital city—we must still assume that Greater Metropolitan Chang'an, the area under supervision of the Governor of the Capital, would have been densely populated, whether inside or outside the capital's city walls, in agreement with the Han *fu*'s description of “towns and settlements connecting one to the next.”

Finally, the names of more than twenty wards of Western Han Chang'an can be verified. Gaodu Ward and Waidu Ward were within the city walls, contrary to some scholars' findings.

Appendix: Supplement to Earlier Lists of Names for the Chang'an City Wards

That Pingdi's court could build 5 wards in the middle of Western Han Chang'an suggests, first, that there was even then some open space in the capital city and, further, that the capital city was not completely commercialized or developed even two hundred years after its founding. Probably Pingdi's 5 wards ought to be included in the figure of 160 wards given by Eastern Han writers, which would mean that for most of Western Han there were 155 wards (not 160) in the capital. Ma Hsien-hsing (fl. 1936–1969 CE), writing of the wards in Western Han Chang'an, says that most probably there were only "about 100 wards" at the time of Han Wudi.⁵⁷

Whether Ma's statement is correct or not, the *Sanfu huangtu* (*Plan of the Three Capital Regions*) supplies a small number of names for the 100-plus wards that existed during the last century of Western Han. Some of the most frequently mentioned names are Xuanming, Jianyang, Changyin, Shangguan, Xiucheng, Huangji, Beihuan, Nanping, Dachang, and Qi. These same ward names appear in the earlier *History of the Han* compilation, in Liu Xiang's (79/788 BCE) *Lienü zhuan* (*Biographies of Exemplary Women*), and in Pan Yue's (247–300 CE) "Western Expedition" *fu* (*Xi zheng fu*). Thanks to some Han wooden documents excavated recently,⁵⁸ we can add several names of Western Han Chang'an city wards to the earlier lists in the received literature. Two works by Wang Zijin list twenty-three names altogether, three of them entirely new: Li Ward, Gou Ward, and Jingshang Ward. Yang Kuan and He Qinggu, however, have pointed out that Wang's identification of Li Ward is flawed, as it is nothing but a misreading of a ward named Xiao.⁵⁹ Wang Shejiao, another expert, mentions three additional wards, without citing any source(s)—Gaodu Ward, Qiong Ward, and Waidu Ward⁶⁰—but Wang's Qiong Ward really refers to the "wards inhabited by the destitute." Wang's two other identifications are no less problematic.⁶¹ Meanwhile, we cannot discount the possibility that a single mansion might occupy two wards in the capital, for in Western Han Chang'an, it seems, Wang Gen's great mansion occupied part or all of two city wards, this being taken as a shameful show of unprecedented ostentation and luxury.⁶²

We can add one more name for a ward, however, a name that apparently dates from Wang Mang's time: Lou's Old Ward (Lou Jiu Li). This ward was named after the minister Lou Hu, a man who returned to live in his old ward after losing favor at the Western Han court. After Wang Mang usurped the throne, Lou was enfeoffed as Noble of Lou's Old Ward (Lou Jiu Li Fucheng); the term Fucheng is a synonym for the title Noble of the Interior (Guanneihou), the top rank in a twenty-rank system of honors. And for now, that is all we can add to the record.

Notes

- 1 For important work on the wards, see, for example, Liu Yunyong 1982; Wang Zhongshu 1984; Yang Kuan 1984, 1989, 1993 (repr.) 199n60; Liu Qingzhu 1987, 1992, 1996; Meng 1994; and Wang Zijin 2007.
- 2 But see Wang Shejiao 2000; Xu Weimin 2008a. Wang's work in particular has provided valuable references for my own research.
- 3 See Nylan 2010b for some of the problems with the text.
- 4 *Wenxuan*, *juan 1 (Xidu fu)*, 7–8; Knechtges translation, 103–7 (modified).
- 5 Kongzi's description (*ji shu qie fu*) comes from *Analects* 13.8, which outlines the process by which the ruler civilizes his subjects.
- 6 I do not discuss the term for “market” in this chapter, except to point out that, according to the “Western Metropolis” *fu*, nine *shi* unquestionably existed in Chang'an city. Researchers should pay attention to this term, as the same phrase seems sometimes to refer to Nine Markets (where “nine” may just have meant “many”) or to Nine Districts, as units of territory or space.
- 7 “He” almost certainly refers to Xiao He and by extension, to his ruler, Gaozu, the Western Han founder.
- 8 *Wenxuan*, *juan 2 (Xijing fu)*, 61–63; Knechtges translation, 187–205 (modified).
- 9 *Hanshu* 28A.1543. Readers should note that Chang'an county was only one of the twelve counties under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Capital (Jingzhao Yin); the larger metropolitan area had 195,702 registered households. Wang Shejiao 2000 figures Chang'an county measured some 260 square kilometers (roughly 30 km E–W and 9 km N–S).
- 10 See Yang Kuan 1993 (repr.) as a representative of this group.
- 11 Zhang Jihai 2006, 140–41, 201, cites an early source saying that if a noble's stipend drew from less than 10,000 households, he was not allowed to build in the capital a mansion (*di*), either of the First Class or Second Class. *Di* were different in that they directly faced the great thoroughfares; nobles allowed to build such mansions did not need to exit via the ward gate (which was shut at night and policed). No residence built inside a ward was called a “mansion,” so far as we know. See *Chuxue ji* 24.578–79, citing “Wei wang zou shi.”
- 12 NB: Many Chinese archaeologists have relabeled what they once called the Shaofu (the Lesser Treasury, or Privy Treasury) as the palace quarters for the high officials on palace duty.
- 13 Zhou Changshan 2001, 122.
- 14 The composition date of the *Zhouli* is hotly disputed, but most put it shortly before unification in 221 BCE. See Elman and Kern 2010 for details.
- 15 See Wang Shejiao 2000.
- 16 Meng 1994.
- 17 *Sanfu huangtu jiaoshi* (He Qinggu 2005), *juan 2*, 94.
- 18 Wang Shejiao 2000, 430.
- 19 Liu Qingzhu 1987.
- 20 Liu Qingzhu, personal communication, August 2012.
- 21 *Sanfu huangtu jiaoshi* (He Qinggu 2005), *juan 2*, 106.
- 22 Yang Kuan 1993 (repr.).
- 23 The excavated Yunmeng documents on laws (*terminus ad quem*, 271 BCE) use *lidian*, while other documents use *lizheng*. Of course, these two terms might designate superior and subordinate officers in a single ward.
- 24 Yang Kuan 1993 (repr.), esp. 211–16.
- 25 The dates of the *Guanzi* compilation are a matter of debate; some parts may date to before the Qin empire (i.e., before 221 BCE), while others may date as late as the first century BCE.
- 26 Miyazaki Ichisada 1962/1991–94; cf. Miyazaki 1960.
- 27 Sato 1966, 20–23. He Yeju 1986, 27, notes that *Luoyang qielan ji* (*A Record of Temples in Luo-*

yang) specifies 300 square paces as the average ward size for Northern Wei. This could mean either that the Northern Wei figure corroborates the earlier figure for Han or that it has been interpolated into the sources for Han.

- 28 After all, we know of no pre-Qin cities whose wards were oriented in a single direction.
- 29 The four Juyan phrases read (1) *she zai li zhong er men dong ru*; (2) *ru li wu men dong ru*; (3) *she shang zhongmen di er li san men dong ru*; and (4) *sheli zhong dong jia men ru*. “Gongzi” is unlikely to be the title for a real “lord” (i.e., a noble); it is probably a courtesy title. See He Shuangquan 1989, 184, strip nos. 282–85, 340–33, 287–13, 74EPT51:84. Lude city was the capital of Zhangye Commandery, and Juyan was a commandery as well; both sites are some distance from the capital.
- 30 See He Shuangquan 1989, 184.
- 31 Zhou Changshan 2001, 147. Zhou Changshan interprets *yan*—unlike I do (see below)—as referring to the residents’ doors. However, I agree with Zhou’s surmise that *men* in the Juyan records refers to the gates to private residences *inside* the wards. After all, the four strips name three wards, none in Chang’an city or its environs.
- 32 *Fengsu tongyi jiaozhu* (Wang Liqi 1981), “Yi wen” (no *juan* specified), 600.
- 33 Yang and Xiong 1989, 2:209–10 (“Shi Chen hou bei”).
- 34 *Hanshu* 72.3066.
- 35 One *Hou Hanshu* biography says that the Eastern Han founder, Emperor Guangwu (r. 25–57 CE), erected a dormitory-style residence for Academicians in his capital at Luoyang. But judging from a comparison of entries found in the *Three Capital Regions* and in Wang Mang’s (r. 9–23) *Hanshu* biography, Guangwu’s dormitory was very probably modeled on the residence built by Pingdi (r. 1 BCE–6 CE) in Western Han Chang’an for the Academicians’ disciples. See *Hou Hanshu* 48.1606, analyzed in Zhang Jihai 2006, 265, 268. These dormitories were aligned east–west, like most of the wards we are imagining.
- 36 According to the *Basic Annals* chapter, 200 separate residences or residential plots were commissioned as housing for the poor. If this refers to 200 residential plots, rather than to 200 separate residences, this yields about 40 residential plots per ward, or roughly 600 square meters per plot. Such an area was large enough to accommodate the population registered in the 2 CE treatise (which Zhou Zhenhe would trace back to Chengdi’s reign). See *Hanshu* 12.353. Without additional commentaries, neither I nor the editors of this volume can know for certain whether *qu* refers to “200 sites” or “200 residential plots.” But this may be the right interpretation.
- 37 The Chinese term for “magnates” is *haoxia*.
- 38 *Shuowen*, annot. Duan Yucai, 12A.587.
- 39 Miyazaki Ichisada 1962/1991–92, citing *Shiji* 48.1950; *Hanshu* 31.1786; cf. Miyazaki 1960. Miyazaki also cites a *Chunqiu fanlu* description of the north and south gates of the ward.
- 40 Zhou Changshan 2001, 146–47.
- 41 See *Shiji* 103.2766–67.
- 42 He Xiu (129–182 CE), commenting on *Gongyang zhuan*, Lord Xuan, Year 15.
- 43 During Western Han only the biggest counties had more than 10,000 registered households. Although 6,400 seems too small a number for the capital Chang’an (itself the center of Chang’an county), many people lived in Chang’an city who were not necessarily listed on its registers, including officials residing there (an estimated 30,000), nobles on diplomatic visits, soldiers stationed there, members of the palace staff and personnel of cult sites, and temporary residents (merchants?) or subordinates (indentured servants and slaves?), to name just a few groups.
- 44 Wang Zijin 2007. We know Wang Mang divided “the area near the Chang’an city walls” (the suburbs near Chang’an?) into “Six Districts,” renaming Chang’an city with the homophonous characters 常安 so that it would not be his capital, but only the administrative seat for those

- six large settlements. Wang Zijin thinks that we can assume that Wang Mang, by this action, was trying to implement the *Zhouli* system, which gives 12,500 households/districts. Wang Zijin would then have us conclude that the Chang'an Six Districts (i.e., Chang'an county) had a registered population of 75,000 households altogether. While plausible, this is speculative.
- 45 Cf. *Shuihudi*, strip E20. See *Shuihudi*, strips 231–32; Hulsewé 1985, D165.
- 46 *Sanfu huangtu jiaoshi* (He Qinggu 2005), *juan* 1, 77. Dong Hongwen et al. 2000. The second figure is longer because Chang'an city was not a neat rectangle, as noted in several chapters in this volume, including the introduction.
- 47 See the chapter by Tang Xiaofeng in this volume. Editors' note: To Michael Nylan's way of thinking, this inability of leading scholars to determine the orientation of the capital city suggests that the capital had no fixed orientation during Western Han, if only because it was built long before the theoretical stipulations for a capital city were outlined by the classicists. Those stipulations can be seen in the *Bohu tong*, supposedly compiled based on Eastern Han court discussions in 79 CE.
- 48 Yang Kuan 1989, 1993 (repr.).
- 49 Liu Rui 2011 includes a synopsis of Yang Kuan's ideas regarding this.
- 50 The Chancellor of the Right (You Chengxiang), for example, ranked higher than the Chancellor of the Left (Zou Chengxiang), and this was true of many other "double" offices as well. On the orientation of honored seats in a ritual setting, one might consider the seating arrangement known from the famous Hongmen Banquet, which shows that one of the honored seats was in the west (i.e., facing east). See *Shiji* 92.312; cf. Watson 1961, 1:30. In addition, a story about Chengdi shows that the honored seat was still in the west; see *Hanshu* 92.3708. Moreover, Shu Commandery in the west served as the "breadbasket" for the capital and the source of many precious metals, as well as nonprecious metals needed for defense, agriculture, and luxury goods. This, and another evidence, suggests why the Weiyang Palace occupied the southwestern corner of the capital, which happened to be located on the most elevated site in Chang'an city.
- 51 This is one of the wards mentioned in *Sanfu huangtu*.
- 52 Or "by night," following *Yiwen leiju* 33.5b (in e-SKQS). On hair washing: officials took regular vacation days scheduled once every five days, so that they could return home from their bureaucratic offices to arrange their personal affairs (and "wash their hair").
- 53 *Lienü zhuan*, "Jingshi jienü."
- 54 *Hanshu* 71.3046, trans. Watson 1974, 170–71 (modified).
- 55 *Hanshu* 92.3716.
- 56 Readers can compare several recent books in the field of the classics, including Ewald and Noreña 2010, Mayer 2012, and Clarke 2003, devoted to neighborhoods in Rome, the "middle classes," and art in the lives of ordinary Romans.
- 57 See Ma Hsien-hsing 1976, 271–72.
- 58 Among those who have studied these documents are Michael Loewe and Oba Osamu (in Japan); and the documents were intensively studied by such scholars as Ma Hsien-hsing, Chen Zhi, He Shuangquan, and Wang Zijin (in China), not to mention earlier scholars such as Lao Gan.
- 59 See Yang Kuan 1993 (repr.), 583; cf. *Sanfu huangtu jiaoshi* (He Qinggu 2005), *juan* 2, 101.
- 60 See n. 18 above and 61 below.
- 61 See *Hanshu* 98.4024. A close reading of the commentaries reveals that Du county, south of Chang'an and the site of Xuandi's (r. 74–48 BCE) imperial mausoleum complex, is one of two suburban counties where land was especially expensive, with 1 *mu* of land costing 1 unit of gold. The Tang commentator Yan Shigu (581–645 CE) makes Waidu and Gaodu the names of two Chang'an city wards; but the Qing scholar Shen Qinhan (1775–1831 CE) thinks the two-char-

acter term “Gaodu” simply refers to wards in the vicinity of the Gaodu River, west of the Chang’an city perimeter walls, saying that the term “Waidu” refers to wards “outside Du” city (i.e., in Duling). See *Hanshu bu zhu*, *juan* 98.7b–8a, note (Wang Xianqian 1900/1959).

- 62 *Hanshu* 54.1764, with a disputed reading. A satirical poem attacked Wang Gen’s (d. 6 BCE) unseemly ambition; his enormous mansion required that workers break through a standing ward wall, though this would usually be considered a crime. Similarly, an Eastern Han ruler, Andi (r. 106–125 CE), awarded his wet nurse a Luoyang mansion that extended over two entire wards. This was also considered an abuse.

The Tombs Built for Han Chengdi and Migrations of the Population

Michael Loewe 魯惟一

CHENGDI, WHO DIED ON A DAY CORRESPONDING TO APRIL 17, 7 BCE, WAS buried at Yanling, situated to the northwest of present-day Yanjiagou village in Weicheng district, Xianyang city. Before then a second burial site had been prepared for him, provoking comments and protests from some of the most outspoken critics of the day, including Liu Xiang (79/78–8 BCE) and Gu Yong (fl. 36–9 BCE).¹ The subject of Chengdi's two tombs is thus well worth pursuing, especially in light of what it can tell us regarding the regular procedures for building Han imperial tombs, the types of criticism such projects could arouse, the parts played by certain individuals in the project and their subsequent fates, and the migrations of the population occasioned by an imperial tomb's construction. Attention is due also to the part played by the emperor himself in this matter of vital interest and the possible influence that some of his consorts or their families may have brought to bear on the issue. As will be seen, interpretation of the evidence presents a number of difficulties.

According to a fragment of the *Han jiu yi* (*Han Ceremonial Precedents*) ascribed to Wei Hong² (fl. ca. 25 CE), the Court Architect was to plan the tomb where the new emperor would reside after death in the year following the accession of an emperor. It could be, as Kamada Shigeo avers, that this was indeed the practice from Wudi onward, but we have records only for Wudi, Chengdi, and Aidi.³ Although the sites for these tombs were determined before the emperor's death, it was perhaps only in the case of Jingdi that the imperial tomb had received its designated title; before receiving that formal designation, the imperial tombs were described as *chu ling*, "preliminary tombs"



FIG. 7.01 View of the present-day site identified as Yanling. Yanling is much the same size as the other imperial mausoleums from Western Han. Like them, it sports a stele by the Qing-dynasty scholar Bi Yuan identifying the site. Photograph courtesy of Michael Nylan, summer 2012.

or “tombs in preparation.”⁴ Nor had the area surrounding the tomb under construction as yet been formed into a separate county. Once established, however, such counties would bear the name of the tomb itself: as in Changling 長陵 (for Gaozu), Pingling, Baling, and so on. It is important to bear in mind the two distinct ways in which these formal designations appear (i.e., for the tomb and for the county), also that the graph *ling* did not elsewhere necessarily imply the existence there of an imperial tomb.

In a number of passages there is no difficulty in interpreting *chu ling* as taken above.⁵ In 65 BCE the name Du county was changed to Duling, and the Chancellor, generals, nobles, and officials at the 2,000-bushel grade who possessed assets of at least one million cash (*qian*) were to be moved there.⁶ In 5 BCE orders were given not to move any inhabitants of the kingdoms or commanderies to the site where Aidi’s tomb was being built.⁷

The record for Chengdi’s tomb is a little more explicit, reading for 31 BCE, “part of Yanling *ting*,” at Weicheng,⁸ was made into the *chu ling*” (Fig. 7.01; also Map 7.01).⁹ In 20 BCE Chengdi made an imperial progress to the *chu ling* (presumably that at Yanling, though the record does not specify), where he granted an amnesty to the convicts engaged in its construction. The text continues: “Those who were to support [the sacrifices at] the imperial tomb were granted an ox and wine for [every] hundred households.”¹⁰ Elsewhere we are told that at some unspecified time five thousand households were moved there from the commanderies and kingdoms to Changling “to support the mausoleum town.”¹¹



MAP 7.01 Plan view of the site of Yanling after a recent survey by local archaeologists. The perimeter wall of the imperial tomb measures 506 meters (east), 528 meters (west), 410 meters (south), and 408 meters (north). The tumulus above the tomb measures 170 meters (west), 162 meters (south), and 160 meters (north), with the east too damaged to measure. Fifty associated tombs in the vicinity of Yanling have tumuli over them, of which twenty-nine have been identified officially as “accompanying burials.” The remaining twenty-one tombs with mounds that are numbered have not been excavated or drilled, apparently. The walled site to the east of the tomb is a cemetery of lords of Qin. Map reproduced with permission from *Xi Han diling zhantū diaocha baogao*, 117.

The Two Sites at Yanling and Changling

There is no specific mention in the passage just cited above of the construction of a tomb for Chengdi at Changling 昌陵; the tomb, mausoleum town, and county seat were created some time later and a great distance away from Yanling, in Xi district, part of Xinfeng county (see Fig. 1.15; Map 1.06). Nor is Changling included in the list of counties given in *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), “Geographical Treatise.” Evidently, in 20

BCE work was simultaneously going on at Yanling and at Changling, which would tally with criticisms by some, including Gu Yong, who in 15 BCE criticized construction of a second tomb site at Changling on the grounds that more than ten years had already been spent building the tomb that later came to be known as Yanling.¹²

The terse records of Chengdi's *Basic Annals* record the sequence of events as follows:¹³

Jingning 1, sixth month, Jiwei (August 4, 33 BCE): accession of Chengdi, following the death of Yuandi on July 8.

Jianshi 2, intercalary month (February, March, 31 BCE): Part of Yanling *ting*, Weicheng, taken as the preliminary tomb.

Hongjia 1, second month, Renwu (April 20, 21 BCE): Emperor's progress to the preliminary tomb; amnesty granted to convicts working there; Changling county created in Xixiang, a part of Xinfeng county; with the bestowal of oxen and liquor (see above).

Hongjia 2, summer (June 19 BCE): Migration of five thousand prominent households, each worth five million cash, from the commanderies and kingdoms to Changling; bestowal of land for burials and residences on the Chancellor, Imperial Counsellor, generals, nobles, princesses, and officials of fully 2,000 bushels grade (*zhong*).

Yongshi 1, seventh month (August until September 16 BCE): Decree ordering the abandonment of Changling, a return¹⁴ to the earlier tomb, and a ban on the migration of officials and others.¹⁵

The sites of Yanling and Changling were widely separated. Yanling is shown in Figure 7.01 and Map 7.01, but the site of Changling has only been tentatively identified (Fig. 7.02). The site of what would eventually be called Yanling was some 20 kilometers northwest of the northwestern corner of Chang'an city; the site lay north of the Wei River, and some 15 kilometers east of Maoling. By contrast, Changling lay in the opposite direction, some 25 kilometers east of the southeast corner of Chang'an city, far to the south of the Wei River and fairly close to Wendi's tomb at Baling,¹⁶ which was irrigated by a tributary of the Wei River that ran south to north. The site of Changling county is given variously as some 10 kilometers due east of Baling or some 6 kilometers to its due north.¹⁷ No formal excavation report exists for the Changling site, but some think they may have located the site, and site visits show rammed earth walls on such a vast scale as to virtually preclude a misidentification (see Fig. 7.02).¹⁸ In any case, the provision of sites for burial and of residences for the highest in the land would appear to be an inducement for people to settle at Changling, thereby lending it honor and attraction (Figs. 7.03a–b).

The decree of 16 BCE ordering the abandonment of the Changling project refers in scathing terms to the failure to complete it on schedule, within the promised three years; the distress that it had caused; and the emperor's own error in judgment in accepting



FIG. 7.02 The site tentatively identified as Changling today, located at the site of an old brick factory, whose operations led to the destruction of most of the unprotected site. Photograph courtesy of Michael Nylan, summer 2012.

a



b



FIG. 7.03 (a) A local expert, He Ruyue of Shaanxi Normal University, identifies the tamped-earth layers of a wall at the site tentatively identified as Chengdi's Changling. (b) Panoramic view of the same side of the wall at the supposed Changling site. Both photographs courtesy of Michael Nylan, summer 2012.

the advice of Court Architect Xie Wannian, who had proposed it. Fortunately we can read something more about the part that Xie played, in the biography of Chen Tang, even if that account is itself far from easy to interpret, it being not always certain when the tomb originally planned for Yanling or the later one at Changling is under reference.¹⁹ Chen Tang is best known for the action that he took with Gan Yanshou in 36 BCE to bring about the defeat of Zhizhi *chanyu*, a Xiongnu leader.²⁰ In any case, in Chen Tang's biography we read that no populations had been moved forcibly to the tomb of Yuandi (d. 33 BCE); some time after work had started at Yanling, Chengdi had come to enjoy that part of the capital region that lay south of Wendi's tomb of Baling, and by way of a change, a settlement was being planned there; and Xie Wannian was hoping for a sizeable reward for the work that he had undertaken, though whether that work was at Yanling or Changling is unclear.²¹

Chen Tang himself described the advantages of the original tomb site at Yanling.²² Arguing that it was well suited to house rich men as residents, he volunteered to be the first to move there. Xie Wannian then assumed the blame for the delay in the construction project at Changling,²³ when his critics leveled three main criticisms. First, Changling, as a low site, had to be raised higher by piling up the earth to form a hill. And while the construction plans specified that the Chamber of Ease²⁴ be built on level ground, no steps had been taken to protect the numinous spirits of the dark world who lay within the soil brought in from elsewhere, thus leaving everything unstable. Second, the conscript servicemen, convicts, and hired labor had been employed by the tens of thousands. Oil lamps had been kept alight into the depths of the night to keep the work going nonstop. As a result, the construction costs were ruinously expensive, with the soil taken from the hills in the east worth as much as the same quantity of grain. Third, the work had been going on for years, affecting everyone, with the result that the nation was worn out, the storehouses were empty, and the common people were crying out in their misery. The site of the earlier tomb was naturally better suited to the task; it was based on excellent soil, its position was high and broad, and it was close to most of the imperial tombs of the emperor's ancestors. Moreover, ten years of work had already been put into it. The right thing to do would be to restart the work at the earlier tomb without initiating any further migrations.

There followed the decree to stop work at Changling, as stated in the *Basic Annals* for Chengdi. The Chancellor Xue Xuan and the Imperial Counsellor Wang Jun²⁵ requested permission to abandon their homes in the newish settlement at Changling. But before their request was brought forward for action, somebody asked Chen Tang whether there might be a chance of migrations in the future, if the buildings were not destroyed. Chen Tang in answer replied that the local representatives of the emperor²⁶ would listen to what his own advisors said; with his own offer in mind, Chen Tang was evidently implying that there might be a chance.

It is by no means clear what Xie Wannian himself was hoping or suggesting at this point. As the passage reads, he seems to be claiming credit for construction of the

preliminary tomb at Yanling as a *fait accompli*, and then encouraging his friend Chen Tang to move his family to the west, on the grounds that they would there enjoy a more comfortable way of life than in the east, away from Chang'an. Interpretation is difficult, because Xie Wannian omits any mention of a project at Changling, while other references make it abundantly clear that it was Xie who was behind such plans. In addition we have Chen Tang extolling the *chu ling* as an excellent place where new settlements should be encouraged, and such praise would have been far more appropriate for the new site of Changling than for a nearly completed site at Yanling.

Could it be that Xie was hoping to win out either way, getting credit for the construction of both Yanling and Changling and intending to retain one site as an attractive site for migrations? An easy explanation would be that Xie hoped for substantial rewards by building the tomb and settlements at the new site of Changling and doing so at speed; and in order to achieve that objective, Xie was encouraging his friends to migrate there. Unfortunately, the text as we have it does not accommodate such a meaning. We have two records of how some families who had moved to Changling were affected by the changes and evidently moved on to Chang'an: Ban Kuang, father of Chengdi's consort Lady Ban (Ban Jieyu) and grandfather of Ban Biao, had grown very rich and he moved to Changling. When work stopped there, he was one of the high officials from prominent families who then registered as residents of Chang'an.²⁷ Xin Qingji, on being appointed general some time after 22 BCE, had also moved to Changling, but when work stopped there, he too stayed on in Chang'an.²⁸

Apart from the schemes ascribed to Xie Wannian and Chen Tang, three other reasons are cited to explain the construction of the tomb at Changling. First, as noted above, Chengdi liked the scenic spot. Second, a fragment cited in the *Taiping yulan* encyclopedia says that Chengdi was having Yanling constructed, and the point came when the shrine for the tomb was to be built.²⁹ A General Dou (otherwise unidentified), who owned young bamboo fields to its south, feared that they would be trampled,³⁰ and so he objected to building the shrine as an inconvenience, whereupon a move was made to construct Changling. Third, in one of the notes incorporated in the *Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*), we find the statement that the original tomb site at Yanling came to be considered unlucky (*fei ji*).³¹ It would seem that we are listening to gossip of the type that arises in a time of ignorance, when the decisions taken can be inexplicable.

Attention is due, perhaps, to one more matter: possible conformity with the Zhaomu ritual system. According to the Zhaomu system, which is mentioned frequently in connection with the last decades of Western Han (but whose existence can by no means be taken for granted),³² an emperor's tomb and the shrine that housed his memorial tablet would be so situated as to demonstrate his relationship to his predecessors and thereby confirm his rightful succession to the throne. It was not always possible to put this into practice, however, as this sort of order might well conflict with the need to follow the generations in kinship.³³ The Zhaomu system would have been served by

TABLE 7.01 Estimate of settlement size at Gaozu's Changling and Maoling

	NORTH TO SOUTH (M)	EAST TO WEST (M)	TOTAL AREA (SQ. KM)
Gaozu's Changling	2,200	1,245	2.74
Maoling	700	1,500	1.05

Source: For these figures, see Loewe 2007, 212–13.

burying Chengdi at Yanling (as was finally done); the tombs of Aidi and Pingdi seem also to be placed consistently with the Zhaomu sequence. By contrast, burying Chengdi at Changling, to the east of Yuandi's tomb and south of the Wei River, would not have conformed with the Zhaomu system. Possibly this consideration affected the decision to return to Yanling, but it is by no means certain that conformity with Zhaomu determined the location of any of the tombs of the Western Han emperors.

We may gain some idea of the work envisaged at Changling 昌陵 from the few facts that we possess regarding other sites of the same type. Archaeological evidence permits an estimate of the size of the settlements built at Gaozu's tomb at Changling 長陵 and Wudi's tomb at Maoling, as shown in Table 7.01.

A further detail regarding Changling suggests that relatives of the imperial consorts and senior officials close to the throne took the opportunity to profiteer from the work by excluding others from taking part.³⁴ Such dealings, enormous in extent, were revealed by the staff serving in the office of Zhai Fangjin, at that time Deputy to the Chancellor. In 18 BCE Zhai Fangjin was duly appointed Governor of the Capital "to keep powerful persons under control." Several senior officials registered their dismay at both the construction and abandonment of Changling, as seen in a memorial by Liu Xiang in 16 BCE, before the Changling project had been completed, while he was Counsellor of the Palace.³⁵ Liu Xiang wrote of the great expense that had been incurred, and he supported his arguments against completing Changling by referencing the *Xici zhuan* (*Appended Phrases*) attached to the *Changes* classic, the principle of the Three Dispensations (San Tong),³⁶ the Mandate of Heaven theory's provision for the transfer from one dynastic house to another, and Kongzi's (Confucius's) interpretation of the *Odes*. Liu Xiang argued that the frugal burial of Wendi was more in line with the practices associated with the Yellow Emperor and the illustrious monarchs; he then contrasted the great tradition of unostentatious burials with the elaborately furnished tombs of rulers such as the First Emperor of Qin. Warming to his theme, Liu Xiang described how the preliminary tomb at Yanling had been planned without grandeur. Changling, however, was to be of a great height; other graves were being uprooted to accommodate it; and the construction of settlements had been grossly expensive. All this caused considerable human suffering, upset yin-yang, and resulted in famine and widespread deaths. He ended by stating bluntly that the emperor should be ashamed of himself.

In what may well be the most caustic of all writings assessing an emperor's reputation, in 16 BCE Gu Yong criticized the building of Changling, listing it with some of

the most regrettable incidents of Chengdi's reign.³⁷ "The construction of Changling ran counter to the nature of Heaven and Earth," Gu wrote, naming in particular the need to raise the level of the ground and the use of convicts to build the housing.

Chengdi's officials proffered conflicting advice. Chunyu Zhang, nephew of the Grand Empress Dowager Wang and Commissioner of the Guards (Weiwei), and Wang Hong argued for abandoning Changling.³⁸ Ping Dang, probably then employed as Commissioner of the Lesser Treasury of the Changxin Palace, maintained that the work should be completed, as it had been going on for so long.³⁹ Perhaps not coincidentally, a decree of 15 BCE conferred on Chunyu Zhang the title Noble of the Interior, and he was promoted to a full nobility in 10 BCE.⁴⁰ Wang Hong, already a Noble of the Interior who is described as being in "permanent attendance" on the emperor,⁴¹ had advised against the project while he was Assistant to the Commissioner for Agriculture. He was rewarded with a gift of gold and rights to raise tax from five hundred households, retaining some part for himself. By contrast, Commissioner of State Visits Ping Dang was punished for his advocacy by demotion to Governor of Julu Commandery (present-day Hebei).⁴² A decree of 15 BCE laid much of the blame on Xie Wannian and ordered his removal from Chang'an to Dunhuang.

No reports of an archaeological investigation of the Changling site have been available to the present writer. Liu Qingzhu and Li Yufang refer to a site in what had been Xinfeng county of Han times,⁴³ where there is a large raised surface of rammed earth, extending to 3 square kilometers, with a number of rectangular pits of about 100 or more square meters, known locally as the octagonal glass well (*ba jiao liuli jing*). The pits run to a depth of 20 meters or more, being apparently built of rammed earth. The local inhabitants, and the Xi'an archaeologists, take the site to be Chengdi's long-lost and unfinished Changling, even if a recent publication devoted to the tombs of Western Han emperors does not treat Changling as a site.⁴⁴ The site is northeast of present-day Xi'an city, north of Wendi's tomb of Baling, but no archaeological work has been undertaken there, perhaps because a brick factory destroyed much of the site (see Fig. 7.02).

The question arises of how far, if at all, the emperor and his consorts were involved in the advancement and abandonment of the project, but without hard evidence, it is only possible to note the sequence of certain events and perhaps speculate. As stated above, the project to build Changling was started in the second month of 20 BCE and abandoned, with a return to the original site, in the seventh month of 16 BCE. During the same time, major changes were taking place in the emperor's domestic arrangements. Empress Xu Kua had been married to Chengdi while he was still heir apparent; at the instigation of Zhao Feiyan, a young female entertainer whose charms had captivated Chengdi soon after he had started his incognito visits to Chang'an in 20 BCE, Xu Kua was denounced on the grounds of imprecation, and duly demoted in 18 BCE. At the same time Chengdi's consort Ban Jieyu was denounced, but her quick-witted defense not only deflected dire punishment but also so impressed Chengdi that he forthwith presented her with a present of a hundred *jin* of gold.⁴⁵ In the sixth month of 16 BCE,

Zhao Feiyan was established as Chengdi's empress.⁴⁶ Ban Jieyu may have enjoyed the support of Chengdi's mother, the Grand Empress Dowager Wang, who disapproved strongly of the establishment of Zhao Feiyan, whose low-class background made her unfit to be an empress.⁴⁷ Certainly, on Empress Xu's demotion, for her own safety, Ban Jieyu asked to join the staff of the Eternal Trust Palace (Changxin Gong), where the empress dowager resided. Of note are at least two references to Chengdi's vacillation regarding Changling and his general inability to act even on advice that he approved. One of these followed the receipt of Liu Xiang's memorial, which is expressed strongly; saying that "the emperor could not act" (*bu neng*) is striking.⁴⁸ The other was Chen Tang's reply to an unnamed questioner (see above), which suggests that Chengdi was thought to be open to persuasion, or even gullible.⁴⁹

We have seen that at some unspecified time the Ban family had an interest in the Changling site, and that Lady Ban had sufficient influence over Chengdi to procure her own safety. Might Chengdi's liking for Changling and his order for a settlement there have been in response to the wishes of the lady, and his eventual abandonment of that site connected with the later elevation of Zhao Feiyan? Against such a supposition we must take account of the way in which Ban Jieyu's relatives handled the matter in the *Hanshu*: they presented forceful arguments meant to show how impractical and harmful the Changling project had been. Would Chengdi's relatives have been so outspoken against Changling had they been personally responsible for persuading Chengdi to initiate the project?

YANLING TODAY

Archaeological investigation of the tombs of the eleven emperors of Western Han has so far been restricted to traces of buildings or other "accompanying" tombs at the sites; no reports are available for work undertaken to excavate the imperial tombs themselves, nor are such excavations expected anytime soon.⁵⁰ A book published in 2010 provides the latest information about the imperial mausoleums, and the following summary is based on that volume and other sources.⁵¹ The area around Chengdi's burial site at Yanling was the subject of investigation by archaeologists working for the Xianyang Municipal Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in November and December 2002. Apart from the tomb's main underground compound, test drills at the site located traces of other buildings and a number of satellite tombs.

The rectangular tomb chamber, oriented slightly northwest to southeast, lies on the west side of a large area traditionally known as Qin Gongling (Mausoleum of a Lord of Qin), which encloses two tombs, whose occupants are unidentified. The tomb compound was surrounded by walls of rammed earth; and, as is evident from the few traces that survive, these walls from 6 to 8 meters in width measured 506 meters (east), 528 meters (west), 410 meters (south), and 408 meters (north) in length. The walls were built with gates and towergates, and some foundations of stone have been found. The

roads that ran through the gates were 8 or 9 meters wide. Rising to a height of 25 meters and measuring 160–172 meters at the base and 53–56 meters at the summit, the tumulus is thus of similar dimensions as the tumuli of other Western Han emperors, aside from the exceptionally large tumulus built for Wudi. A pit at the center of the summit is 4 meters deep, with a diameter of 25–30 meters. A passageway at the southwest corner of the tumulus led south for about 100 meters. A monument set up by the antiquarian Bi Yuan (1730–1797 CE) identifies the tumulus south of the center of the tomb compound as belonging to Chengdi (Fig. 7.01).

A further compound was made on the west side of the main tomb's compound, directly abutting its northwest corner. Measuring 190 meters east to west and 216 meters north to south, this was found to include quantities of pieces of rope-patterned tiling, brickwork, and ceramics. The report names this compound *qin yuan*.⁵² Situated southeast of the tomb's compound there is yet a third site (currently named Yanjiagou), which had been enclosed by rammed-earth walls extending 450 meters east to west and 250 meters north to south. The site yielded ceramic fragments and tiling of a variety of shapes and patterns, some of rope pattern and some circular end-tiles used for roofing (*wadang*) inscribed "long life with no end" (*chang sheng wu ji*). Much of the tiling is patterned in Qin style, leading to speculation that Yangjiagou was once a building site attached to the Qin Gongling to its north, kept in repair and used in Han times.

A far larger compound lies west of the main tomb's compound and follows the same orientation: it measures 606 to 642 meters east to west and 1,420 meters north to south, although much of its southern part has been destroyed by a brick factory's use of the soil. Comparatively large parts of its west wall and much of its east wall are preserved. The sites of fourteen satellite tombs are within the compound, eleven with their tumuli still standing, lying in five parallel rows running east to west that each typically consist of three or four tomb sites. A monument at the largest of these, alone in the most southerly row, with a tumulus 18 meters high, identifies it as the tomb of Chengdi's first empress, née Xu, demoted in 18 BCE. Four other tombs are situated west of the compound; a group of three tombs lies north of the main tomb compound and another group lies east of the Yanjiagou site.

On Migrations to Imperial Mausoleum Towns

As we have seen, the construction of Chengdi's tomb raised the question whether it was suitable to order the migration of certain elements of the population. We know that such operations were ordered at the outset of the Western Han dynasty:

When Han arose the capital city was established at Chang'an. The Tian families of Qi; the Zhao, Qu and Jing families of Chu; and those of meritorious senior officials were moved to Changling 長陵. Thereafter from one generation to another the families of officials of 2,000-bushel [*shi*] grade, of well-propertied and rich

men and men of power and substance who had taken possession of many landed estates, were moved to the tombs of the emperors. Clearly, the purpose was to strengthen the trunk and weaken the branches—not simply to maintain the tumuli over the tombs and their surrounding parks with due respect.⁵³

Removal of the Tian family of Qi from their homelands to an area where they could be kept under surveillance can easily be understood as a preventative and defensive measure; some of the family's members had taken part in the fighting that had intervened between the fall of Qin and the foundation of Han, and they might well be expected to intervene in dynastic matters again, should opportunity arise.⁵⁴

Subsequent migrations to the sites of imperial tombs are recorded as follows:

152 BCE: People were recruited to move to Yangling (Jingdi's tomb) with a gift of 200,000 cash.⁵⁵

138 BCE: Gifts of 200,000 cash and 2 *qing* of land were offered to those who moved to Maoling, the tomb intended for Wudi and started in 139 BCE.⁵⁶

127 BCE: Men of substance from the commanderies and kingdoms with at least 3,000,000 cash were moved to Maoling.⁵⁷

96 BCE: Officials and others, and men of power and substance, of the commanderies and kingdoms were moved to Maoling and Yunling, the tomb prepared by Zhaodi for his mother.⁵⁸

84 BCE: People were recruited (*mu*) to move to Yunling with the gift of money, land, and dwellings.⁵⁹

83 BCE: Rich persons from the three parts of the metropolitan area were moved to Yunling with gifts of 100,000 cash to each household.⁶⁰

73 BCE: Officials and others with at least 1,000,000 cash were recruited to move from the commanderies and kingdoms to Pingling, Zhaodi's own tomb.⁶¹

72 BCE: Pingling was constructed with money supplied by the Commissioner of Waterways and Parks (Shuiheng Duwei); people were moved there to start building housing.⁶²

65 BCE: A site east of Du was chosen for Xuandi's tomb in waiting; the name Duxian was changed to Duling; the Chancellor, generals, nobles, and officials of 2,000-*shi* rank, worth 1,000,000 cash, were moved to Duling.⁶³

40 BCE: When the site for the tomb of Yuandi was chosen, a decree called attention to the evil effects and popular suffering caused by migrations to the imperial tombs and ordered that no county or settlements should be built there.⁶⁴

Moreover, at some unspecified time during Chengdi's reign, five thousand households were moved from the commanderies and kingdoms to Changling "to support the mausoleum town."⁶⁵

TABLE 7.02 Registered populations of large urban areas in greater metropolitan Chang'an and its immediate suburban counties

MAUSOLEUM	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	RATIO OF HOUSEHOLDS TO INDIVIDUALS
Gaozu's Changling	50,057	179,469	1:3.5
Wudi's Maoling	61,087	277,277	1:4.5
Chang'an (county)	80,800	246,200	1:3.0

Source: *Hanshu* 28.

Hanshu chapter 28 includes figures for the households registered in 10 of the 1,577 counties of the empire (e.g., for Chang'an, Chengdu, and Luoyang); for 5 of these the numbers of individuals are also supplied. Two of the settlements where emperors were buried are included, as shown in Table 7.02.

Presumably the large populations of Changling and Maoling resulted from the policy of migration. It is unlikely that all who were moved there lived inside those two townships. More probably the figures included farming households settled in the surrounding countryside. Such households would thus grow some of the supplies needed by the nonfarming inhabitants of Chang'an city, including the great figures in the palaces and the staff who served them, the conscript servicemen, the thirty thousand officials. It is understandable that the government would have encouraged or initiated the migration of farming families to the metropolitan area for this purpose.

Migrations are also recorded under different circumstances. At the outset of the Qin empire, 120,000 households of men of power and wealth were moved to Xianyang, probably in order to keep potential dissidents under surveillance.⁶⁶ At the same time as the removal to Maoling in 127 BCE, 100,000 individuals were recruited to move to the newly founded commandery of Shuofang.⁶⁷ There are also several reports of migrations undertaken with the intention of relieving popular distress.⁶⁸ Three passages refer to migrations of 120–119 BCE,⁶⁹ during Wudi's reign, when the merchants were said to have been profiteering, and there were grave shortages in the east. Among the measures taken to allay the distress, a large number of individuals were moved to the west, to be supplied with the necessities of life at public expense.⁷⁰ One account gives the figure of 700,000 migrants moving to the south of Shuofang, filling up Xinqin (New Qin);⁷¹ a second gives a total of 725,000 migrants moving to Longxi, Beidi, Hexi, Shangjun, and Kuaiji.⁷² Around 114 BCE, at a time of another serious famine in the east, orders were given that those in danger of starving should be given the opportunity to move to the area between the Yangzi and the Huai Rivers, so that they might try to earn a living there.⁷³

Migrations of the population occurred in five ways, for different reasons: First, they were intended to keep potential dissidents under surveillance. Second, they were to spread the resources of the wealthy more evenly around the empire, by inducing such persons to move. Third, they were a means of increasing agricultural production, some-

times providing land and houses for the migrants. Fourth, they were ordered in order to populate a newly established commandery. Fifth, they were a means of relieving distress in times of want. But the bare statements that we possess today prompt a host of unanswered questions. We have no idea of the means used to bring about a migration once it was ordered. If a migration needed to be organized by officials, possibly with the help of conscript servicemen, we may ask whether such men were found by the central government or by the authorities in the provinces; whether, or how frequently, a degree of compulsion was necessary to force people to move; and in what way a move of distressed and starving folk was to be accomplished. If a migration was intended to bring unworked land under the plough, removal of poor farming families directly to such areas would have left them with no immediate means of sustenance or provision of dwellings, unless it was provided.

We may also ask how removal of the rich families was contrived. How were they induced to move away from where they were settled and presumably enjoying the comforts of their large landholdings or wealth? And after their change of residence, in what ways did these rich families improve the general living conditions in the areas to which they were moved? Were they expected to employ and give a living to numbers of landless families? In particular, the removal of the Chancellor, the most senior official of the empire, and other highly placed dignitaries, as reported for 65 BCE in connection with Duling, is especially difficult to comprehend. Was the “removal” in fact the gift of a country estate to which each household could retire and perhaps be buried? However noble, high-minded, or rational the imperial intentions may have been, did the implementation of these migration orders not cause as much distress as they were intended to allay, as is suggested by the decree of Yuandi? Yuandi’s ban on migrations may well have been congruent with the policies that were being adopted at the time, such as that of reducing the expenditure of the court and an abortive attempt to relax control over part of the population’s activities.⁷⁴ A renewal in his son’s time may perhaps be interpreted as part of a reaction against the austerities practiced in his father’s reign.

Notes

- 1 Gu Yong expressed his criticism of Chengdi in 29, 15, and 12 BCE, presumably in 15 BCE while Regional Inspector.
- 2 *Hou Hanshu* (treatise) 6.3144; *Han jiu yi bu yi*, B.7a (*Sibu beiyao*).
- 3 Kamada 1962, 520. As Wendi left precise instructions for his tomb in his valedictory decree (*Shiji* 10.433; *Hanshu* 4.131), we may assume that work had not yet started on its construction. Other intervals elapsed between the accessions of Jingdi and of Yuandi and the construction of their tombs. Jingdi’s tomb, started in 153 or 152 BCE (*Shiji* 5.442–43; *Hanshu* 5.143), was probably completed in 146 BCE (*Shiji* 11.445; *Hanshu* 5.147). Wudi’s tomb was started in 139 BCE (*Hanshu* 6.158), that of Xuandi, in 65 BCE (*Hanshu* 8.253), and that of Yuandi, in 40 BCE (*Hanshu* 9.292). Construction of tombs for Chengdi and Aidi started in 31 and 5 BCE, respectively (*Hanshu* 10.305, 11.340).
- 4 Perhaps exceptionally, Jingdi’s tomb is named as Yangling in records for 153 or 152 BCE (*Shiji*

11.442–43; *Hanshu* 5.143). However this apparent premortem designation may represent an anachronism, as chapter 11 of the *Shiji* was one of ten chapters that went missing after the death of Sima Qian and was possibly “reconstituted” long after Sima Qian’s era. See *Hanshu buzhu* 62.16a; *Hou Hanshu jijie* 40A.3a, notes; also Loewe 2000, 338.

Regarding the term *chu ling*: To the *Hanshu*’s record of the construction of the *chu ling* for Yuandi in 40 BCE, Fu Qian (ca. 125–195 CE) added the note “the tomb established for Yuandi, as yet unnamed and therefore termed *chu*.” See *Hanshu* 9.292; *Hanshu buzhu* 9.10a. Other examples where *chu* is used in this way pertain to the tomb of Xuandi (started in 65 BCE) and Aidi (started in 5 BCE).

- 5 See, for example, *Hanshu* 8.253, 11.340.
- 6 No such move is recorded for 40 BCE, however, under Yuandi.
- 7 *Hanshu* 11.340.
- 8 Weicheng was situated some 20 kilometers west of Chang’an city.
- 9 *Hanshu* 10.305. The term *ting*, which is used in various ways, may here designate the seat of a subordinate official in the county.
- 10 *Hanshu* 10.316, following Dubs 1938–55, 2:394–95. The *Qian Hanji* reads that one degree of the orders of honor was bestowed empire-wide, and an ox and liquor were given to every hundred households with women and children; see *Qian Hanji*, *juan* 10, 444. Xinfeng (present-day Lintong, E 100°10’, N 34°15’), which was in the area under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Capital, was established in 200 BCE; see *Hanshu* 28A.1543.
- 11 *Hanshu* 27A.1341.
- 12 *Hanshu* 70.3024. For Gu Yong’s reference, see *Hanshu* 85.3462.
- 13 *Hanshu* 10.302, 305, 316, 317, 320. Corresponding dates are given according to the Gregorian calendar (not then in existence).
- 14 Reading *fan* 反 in place of *ji* 及; see *Hanshu buzhu* 10.11a.
- 15 It is not clear whether this was a general ban on migrations or one that was limited to a particular site.
- 16 *Hanshu* 10.316. Yan Shigu (581–645 CE) explains the site as belonging to Xixiang, a district watered by the Xi River, which lay some 30 kilometers east of Baling.
- 17 See Tan Qixiang 1982–87, 15–16; *Xi Han diling zuantan diaocha baogao* 2010, 3. At an unspecified date Juan Xun, who had been Colonel of Internal Security (Sili Xiaowei), was demoted to the post of Magistrate (Ling) of Changling (*Hanshu* 84.3415). One passage of the *Hanshu* refers to the site as on the outskirts of Chang’an (*Hanshu* 27A.1341).
- 18 No indication is to be found in *Zhongguo wenwu ditu ji: Shaanxi fence* 1998, *shang*, 144–45. No formal reports about the Changling site exist, presumably because the site has been disturbed by the recent occupation of a brick factory (now abandoned for unknown reasons).
- 19 *Hanshu* 70.3023.
- 20 Successful as the action was, both men were subject to reprimand or worse, as they had forged the imperial orders to summon the troops needed. In addition, Chen Tang was charged with other offences, although Liu Xiang and Gu Yong were among his powerful supporters.
- 21 Xie Wannian pointed out that hitherto completion of buildings that had pleased the emperor of the day had resulted in rewards and promotion for the officials who had constructed them. Such had been the case for Yang Guang, in Wudi’s time; and for Geng Shouchang, who built Duling as the tomb for Xuandi. Nothing else is known of Yang Guang. Geng Shouchang is best known for his proposals to ease economic conditions during the reign of Xuandi.
- 22 He did so by submitting a “sealed matter” (*feng shi*); for this expression, see Giele 2006, 66 (rendered as “direct submissions”).
- 23 According to *Hanshu* 27A.1341, the work was not completed in five years, and the project at

Changling was then suspended. Yan Shigu notes that the households who had been moved there were sent back to their original places of residence.

- 24 Bian Fang likely to be an alternative term for Bian Dian (Chamber of Ease), for whose function see Nylan and Loewe 2010, 218–19.
- 25 Wang Jun 王駿 (1), in Loewe 2000, 531.
- 26 For the meanings of the term *xianguan*, including its use by officials to denote “the emperor,” see Loewe 2008, 520–23.
- 27 *Hanshu* 100A.4198. Registration at Chang’an implies that they moved to take up residence there.
- 28 *Hanshu* 69.2998.
- 29 See *Taiping yulan* 37.6b, citing *Sanfu jiushi* (*Old Matters of the Three Capital Regions*); see *Hanshu buzhu* 10.9a, note by Qian Dazhao (1744–1813 CE).
- 30 Alternatively, he feared that it was the site of the shrine that would suffer from trampling.
- 31 *Shuijing zhu* 19.22a (*Sibu beiyao*).
- 32 For the Zhaomu system, see Nylan and Loewe 2010, 215–16; and Loewe 1994a, 276–79. Loewe 1994a, 5, summarizes: “Possibly after the reign of Yuandi (48–33 BC), but by no means regularly, the choice was determined according to a system known as *Zhaomu*.” Liu and Li 1987, 147, accepts that the situation of some of the tombs followed the Zhaomu system, but Huang Zhanyue 2005 disagrees, as do many of the Xi’an archaeologists.
- 33 For the location of the eleven Western Han imperial tombs, see *Han Duling lingyuan yizhi*, fig. 1; Loewe 1994a, 275; Nylan and Loewe 2010, 214. It has been suggested that the tombs of Gaozu and Huidi were situated with the Zhaomu system in mind, moving from west to east as the generations passed; that Wendi, as a brother of Huidi, could not have had his tomb situated to the east of Huidi’s, as Huidi’s own son would have been. For various reasons it was not possible to adopt the Zhaomu system for Zhaodi and Xuandi, but a start was made again with Yuandi, whereby his immediate successor would be placed to the west of his own tomb.
- 34 *Hanshu* 84.3416.
- 35 Xun Yue, *Hanji* 26, in *Qian Hanji* 31.456; and Sima Guang (1019–1086 CE), *Zizhi tongjian*, *juan* 31, cited in (*Xin jiao*) *Zizhi tongjian zhu*, 1003, both of which date this memorial to before the abandonment of Changling, as seems to be correct. The text of *Hanshu* 36.1950, however, reads that the return to Yanling had already taken place, thereby depriving Liu Xiang’s memorial of its point. Perhaps the text is defective, omitting some such expression as “there had been discussion about a return to Yanling,” except that at this juncture Chengdi’s tomb had not yet been named Yanling.
- 36 This is an early reference to the scheme whereby rulership passed according to Three Dispensations. For this subject, see Loewe 2011, 296–302, 317–34.
- 37 *Hanshu* 85.3462.
- 38 Wang Hong was a nephew of Yuandi’s Empress Wang.
- 39 *Hanshu* 71.3050, 93.3730.
- 40 *Hanshu* 10.322, 18.708, 93.3730, 97B.3989.
- 41 That is, *changshi* 常侍.
- 42 *Hanshu* 19B.838, 71.3050.
- 43 For Xinfeng, see n. 10 above.
- 44 Liu and Li 1987, 118–19. The site of Changling is shown in *Xi Han diling zuantan diaocha baogao* 2010, 3, fig. 1.
- 45 *Hanshu* 97B.3983–85. There is no record of a charge or of judicial proceedings that followed Zhao Feiyan’s denunciation.
- 46 *Hanshu* 10.319.
- 47 *Hanshu* 97B.3989. The Grand Empress Dowager also approved of the quick way in which Ban

- Jieyu had responded to one of Chengdi's advances. *Hanshu* 97B.3984.
- 48 *Hanshu* 36.1957 says that Chengdi was "deeply impressed by Xiang's words, but the emperor could not act to follow his advice" (*bu neng zong qi ji*); however, *Zizhi tongjian* 31.1004 omits all mention of Chengdi's reaction.
- 49 *Hanshu* 70.3024.
- 50 Excavations have indeed taken place at the outskirts of Jingdi's tomb, at Yangling, and at Xuan-di's tomb, Duling.
- 51 For Chengdi's tomb at Yanling, see *Xi Han diling zuantan diaocha baogao* 2010, 115–36. For an earlier report, see Liu and Li 1987, 114–19.
- 52 See *Xi Han diling zuantan diaocha baogao* 2010, 116. For the place of the *qin* (Chamber of Rest) in other Western Han imperial tombs, see Nylan and Loewe 2010, 218–19, 226–27.
- 53 *Hanshu* 28B.1642. *Shiji* 99.2720 records this as a proposal by Lou Jing in slightly different terms, circa 200 BCE.
- 54 For example, see the entries for Tian Dan, Tian Heng, Tian Ken, and Tian Rong in Loewe 2000, 504–11.
- 55 *Hanshu* 5.143.
- 56 *Hanshu* 6.158.
- 57 See also *Hanshu* 64B.2802 for the proposal of Zhufu Yan to move rich families with large land-holdings to Maoling. Cf. *Hanshu* 6.170
- 58 *Hanshu* 6.205. Yan Shigu emends Yunling to read Yunyang, where Wudi's consort Gouyi (Zhao Jieyu, mother of Zhaodi) was buried. But as Gouyi was still alive in 96 BCE, it is hardly possible that her tomb could have been named at that time. Likewise, Yunling, the tomb prepared by Zhaodi for his mother, did not exist in 96 BCE. Yunling is omitted in *Zizhi tongjian* 22.721.
- 59 *Hanshu* 7.221.
- 60 *Hanshu* 7.221.
- 61 *Hanshu* 8.239.
- 62 *Hanshu* 8.242.
- 63 *Hanshu* 8.253.
- 64 *Hanshu* 9.292.
- 65 *Hanshu* 27A.1341.
- 66 *Shiji* 6.239; see Bodde 1986, 55, 101.
- 67 *Hanshu* 6.170.
- 68 *Hanshu* 24A.1127, for example, records the time of a famine during the founding of Western Han, when orders were given to allow people to sell their children and then move to earn a living in Shu and Hanzhong in the west
- 69 *Hanshu* 6.178 (dated to 119 BCE), 24B.1162, 1166.
- 70 That is, by the *xianguan*; it is not clear whether in this passage the term indicates special agencies or the regular offices of the counties. For uses of the term, see nn. 26, 32 above.
- 71 *Hanshu* 24B.1162. For Xinqin, see the notes in *Hanshu buzhu* 24B.10a.
- 72 *Hanshu* 6.178.
- 73 *Hanshu* 24B.1172.
- 74 For example, reduction of prime feed for horses in the imperial stables, suspension of the *juedi* games, closure of three agencies for clothing and the short-lived abolition of the monopolies for salt and iron in 44 BCE. See *Hanshu* 9.285, 24A.1142, 24B.1176.



PLATE 1 A late Western Han bronze-gilt vessel from Shaanxi Provincial Museum, donated to the museum in 1957 by the Shangpin Temple, in Fuxiang county, Shaanxi. Dimensions: 24.8 cm high, 85 cm in diameter at the largest part of the belly, 21 cm in diameter at the mouth. The vessel lid weighs 1,260 metric grams; vessel body, 6,870 metric grams. The inscription on the smooth leaves of gilt surface extending from the lip of the jar tells us the weight of the vessel, measured in Han units. The inscription on the lid identifies the vessel as a “tripod” (which is incorrect) belonging to a member of the imperial family or a high-ranking noble, according to the analysis by museum personnel: 家鼎盖重五斤八两。Unfortunately, many characters in the inscriptions running down the sides cannot be read, though all seem to refer to the weight and capacity of the vessel: 器口刻...重二十八斤...□年第五十四重廿二斤十二两...今廿□斤...□□十四两。Permission to reproduce this vessel has been granted by Han Jianwu 韩建武, on the museum staff, whose helpful documentation is entitled “Shaanxi Lishi bowuguan cang ji jian Handai qingtong qi de kaoshi” 陕西历史博物馆藏几件汉代青铜容器的考释 [An examination of several Han bronzes in the Shaanxi Historical Museum collection].

PLATE 2 Original excavation photograph of the late Western Han mural tomb at Jiaotong University. Reproduced with permission from the Jiaotong University Archival Office, which holds the original excavation photographs. Compare Figure 4.03, which shows a detail of the famous mural on the ceiling of the tomb, representing the sun and moon. These two images correspond to an image from Cheng Linquan 1991, fig. 1.





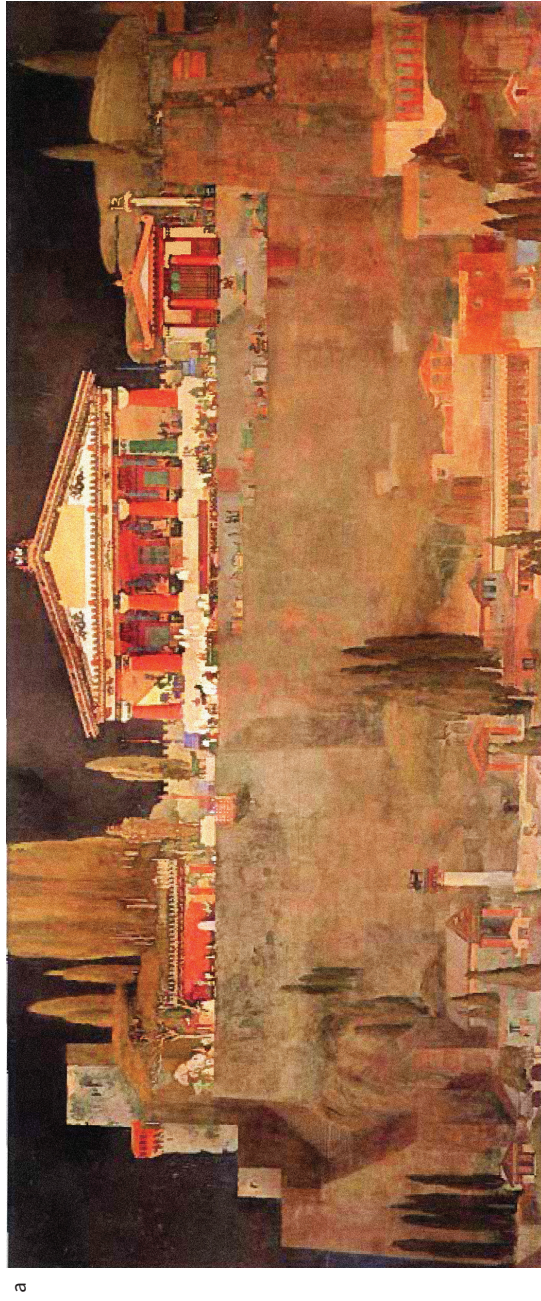
PLATE 3 Detail of the ceiling showing cosmological motifs in the late Western Han mural tomb at Jiaotong University. Reproduced with permission from the Jiaotong University Archival Office, which holds the original excavation photographs. Compare Figure 4.03, which shows a detail of the famous mural on the ceiling of the tomb, representing the moon, also with the hare and the frog. These images correspond to an image from Cheng Linquan 1991, fig. 1.

PLATE 4 Detail of the banquet scene from M1 at Ligong University. Reproduced, with permission from Wenwu chubanshe, from *Wenwu*, no 5. (2006). Compare Figure 4.05c, which shows more of the banquet scene on the western wall of the mural tomb.



PLATE 5 Painted scenes from a mural tomb in Dingbian (modern northern Shaanxi Province), dated to the Wang Mang era (9–23 CE). Reproduced with permission from *Wenwu*, no. 7 (2010): colorplate cover. Compare Figure 4.01, the black-and-white image.





a



b

PLATE 6 Rome-China comparison, in color.
(a) Rome, the 1924 reconstruction by Jacques Carlu of the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, showing the probable bright colors used in Augustan times. See *Roma Antiqua, envois degli architetti francesi 1788–1824* (Paris: École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1986), 62, fig. 24. (b) For China, the archaeologists' 1970s imagined reconstruction of the Epang Palace complex (near the site of the Western Han capital), which was never built during Qin. Compare Fig. 1.13.

a



b



PLATE 7 (a) A lacquer mirror stand from a large tomb dubbed M106 by excavators in 2002, at a site close to present-day Rizhao city, Shandong, dated to late Western Han. Dimensions: 15.6 cm, diameter of flaring rim; 14.8 cm, diameter of raised circular interior; 3 cm high. The red lacquer is ornamented with black lacquer and silver. Reproduced with permission from *Wenwu*, no. 1: cover. Compare Fig. I.04a, the black-and-white image. (b) Grain jars, late Western Han (ca. 30 BCE) or Xin dynasty (9–23 CE). The combination of a gray or mustard-colored background with black checkerboard designs is confined, apparently, to that short period of time, though decorative volutes on the red background enjoyed a much longer history in Zhanguo, Qin, and Western and Eastern Han ornament. Reproduced with permission from the Shaanxi Historical Museum/Lishi Bowuguan, with special thanks to Han Jianwu.



PLATE 8 (a) Overhead view of the tomb of Zhang Anshi (d. 68 BCE), Noble of Fuping, filled with red lacquer-ware whose wooden cores have collapsed. Note the lack of pictorial stones or colored murals on the tomb walls, presumably because late Western Han nobility used silk hangings instead. Fourteen tombs belonging to members of Zhang's family, including his descendants, are clustered at one site. Tomb M13 has been tentatively identified as belonging to Zhang's daughter-in-law, and one or more of Zhang's three sons should be buried there as well, so that the family cemetery dates mostly to Chengdi's reign. Unfortunately, all but one of the fourteen tombs was looted before archaeologists identified the site and began work. (b) Archaeologists at the site finding painted earthenware storage jars in a side chamber of Zhang Anshi's tomb, which is placed at the center of all the other secondary tombs belonging to other members of that noble's family. Reproduced by permission of the the Shaanxi Institute of Archaeology and the lead archaeologists, Ding Yan and Cao Long.

PART 2

Sociopolitical Transformations in Late Western Han

HISTORICAL CHANGE IS OFTEN HARD TO DISCERN, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT cloaks itself in the guise of a “return to antiquity” or figures as seemingly unremarkable incremental adjustments to long-standing institutions. The central claim of part 2 is that late Western Han—and specifically Chengdi’s reign—while almost invariably dismissed as “of no significance” was a pivotal era of *change* whose impact was felt, not only in the Xin and Eastern Han dynasties, but also well beyond into later dynasties in China. The formal embrace of the legacy imputed to early Western Zhou, with the concomitant rejection of the hegemonic rule celebrated under the *bawang* (hegemon) of Qin and early Western Han—the “classical turn” to which these chapters all point—reflected a fundamental rethinking of the empire’s ideological priorities, not to mention its legal, administrative, moral, and economic practices. Many of these new priorities asserted or confirmed the centrality of the late Western Han capital at Chang’an to the realm.

The origins of this climate of change cannot be traced to a single factor, but we do see that new ways of reading the Five Classics gained greater attention in the highest court circles, which had an impact on policy decisions. Worrisome calendrical computations, the inexplicable appearance of Halley’s Comet, plus several floods and a solar eclipse induced a sense of urgency during Chengdi’s reign. Notwithstanding, court officials seemed confident that their brilliant court, led by the “perfect” emperor likened to a god, could undertake the necessary institutional and perceptual reforms to reverse course, so as to shore up the brilliance of the Western Han ruling house. And indeed, the received records point to a host of new initiatives presupposing a new conception of a fully unified empire centered on the capital, including the institution of the first imperial library, the first physical and conceptual maps of the empire, and a willingness to curtail military adventurism and provide relief measures for the poor.

Chengdi's Reign, Problems and Controversies

Michael Loewe 魯惟一

LIU AO, SON OF YUANDI AND WANG ZHENGJUN, ASSUMED THE TITLE OF emperor on August 4, 33 BCE, at the age of eighteen.¹ Those senior officials and men of letters who had studied the history of the Western Han dynasty may well have wondered how the comparative youngster would conduct himself in his new position. They would not have expected him to be as forceful and decisive as the two founding emperors of Qin and Western Han, not to mention Han Jingdi (r. 157–141 BCE); still, they might have hoped that Liu Ao would not be as weak minded as Huidi (r. 195–188 BCE) or the two infants who were nominal emperors under Empress Lü (188–180 BCE).² Wudi, long as his reign had been (r. 141–87 BCE), had rarely initiated imperial policies or exerted a decisive influence; unlike Wendi (r. 180–157 BCE), he had not earned a reputation for being a fair and benevolent ruler. More recently, and exceptionally, Liu Ao's grandfather, Xuandi (r. 74–48 BCE), had shown himself anxious to take part in the work of government. But Liu Ao's father, Yuandi (r. 48–33 BCE), who had been trained in the classics, had initially reacted against his father's highly practical outlook and had taken refuge, toward the end of his reign, in a life of amusement, seemingly uninterested in the conduct of affairs of state.³

Those who attended Chengdi's accession may well have seen his role and function as that of a supreme ruler who possessed absolute authority over ritual matters but carried little or no direct responsibility for initiating specific acts of government. As the source from whom all valid orders were derived in theory, his position was essential: he would accept proposals, reports, and suggestions brought to him by his advisers and

majestically signify his approval, commanding that all be carried out. Still, by the time of Chengdi, an emperor did not initiate such proposals, and any attempt to influence a policy might have met with fierce resentment from his duly appointed officials. Moreover, whatever his personal ambitions, Chengdi had few examples of a highly active and determined emperor to guide him.

In fact, the newly acceded emperor may well have felt himself somewhat dominated by several officials who held high positions and had already shown their strength. Kuang Heng, Chancellor (Chengxiang) since 36 BCE, was a man of high principles and pronounced opinions who had not hesitated to reprimand Yuandi. Zhang Tan, who had served as one of Chengdi's tutors while he was heir apparent, was appointed Imperial Counsellor (Yushi Dafu), the post just below the Chancellor, shortly before Yuandi's death. Wang Feng, uncle of both Chengdi and Wang Mang, who did so much to strengthen the position of the Wang family, was immediately appointed General-in-Chief (Da Jiangjun) upon Chengdi's accession, with the honorary title of Marshal of State (Da Sima). There were two men of some prominence, each named Wang Shang, to one of whom Chengdi already owed a debt. At one time Yuandi had had it in mind to displace Liu Ao from his position as heir apparent and to replace him with Liu Kang. Wang Shang had lent his support to Liu Ao and was duly appointed General of the Right in 41 BCE, and thereafter he rose steadily in the ranks, assuming the chancellorship from 29 to 25 BCE. An uncle of Chengdi, who was also named Wang Shang, duly became Marshal of State during the last years of Chengdi's reign (12–7 BCE).⁴

It is in these circumstances that we may consider the opinions of Chengdi that our histories record. At one time he had enjoyed intimate relations with a member of the Ban family, as will be seen below, and it was on the basis of what his relatives had told him that Ban Biao (3–54 CE) wrote as follows:

He [Chengdi] took great care with his deportment, adopting a correct posture when riding in his carriage, never turning around or speaking in haste, or gesturing.⁵ He was dignified and grave when he attended court, inspiring awe like a god, and his behavior might be called majestic, as [suited] the Son of Heaven.⁶ He had looked hard at matters past and present, and was ready to listen to forthright speaking. Those who served him in high positions were fit for their duties, such that their proposals and counsel should be recorded. He was lucky enough to live at a time of long-standing peace, when those of high and low places lived in friendship with one another.

It was in these circumstances that he was overwhelmed by a love of strong drink and women, and it gives me the greatest pain to talk of how the Zhao family disrupted his private life and the relatives of his womenfolk dominated the court. From the Jianshi reign period (32–29 BCE) onward, the Wang family started to take control of the country; and after the short reigns of Aidi and

Pingdi (r. 7–1 BCE, r. 1 BCE–6 CE), Wang Mang then seized unlawful possession of the supreme position. It was by a long process that the latter acquired his authority and good fortune.⁷

Ban Biao was not the only person to be shocked by Liu Ao's behavior. When Liu Ao's father, Yuandi, realized how far his son was given to material pleasures, he seriously thought of displacing him and naming another son to be heir apparent.⁸

The short notes that explain the motives underlying composition of each of the hundred chapters of the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), written by Ban Biao's son, Ban Gu (32–92 CE), are couched in a highly rhetorical style. For the *Basic Annals* chapters, Ban Gu was usually content to summarize the activities or achievements of the emperors; generally, he did not strive to assess their characters. True, his remarks on Xuandi are complimentary, but neither Gaozu nor Wudi is exalted as a hero responsible for the glories of the empire, and the remarks about Chengdi are couched in highly exceptional terms: "He was brilliant, shedding light when he attended the court, a man whose authority and manners were those like the *gui* and *zhang* ritual jades. Indulgent as he was to the Zhao sisters, the court and government lay with the Wang family. Gleaming like a flame, his light nonetheless failed to shine."⁹

The reservations and regrets expressed by Ban Biao may be set against other accounts of Chengdi's marital relations and his personal behavior. Both his Empress Xu and his consort Ban Jieyu (Ban Biao's aunt) bore him a son, but neither child survived infancy; eventually both these women were accused of uttering curses against the emperor and were removed from court in 18 BCE.¹⁰ Meanwhile the emperor had been visiting Chang'an and elsewhere incognito, to enjoy the pleasures that certain quarters of the city offered. Mixing with young persons whose habits were in no way suitable for the court, he brought back two sisters to his palace, one of whom had been a slave before acquiring the skills of a singer and a dancer. The attractions of "Flying Swallow" Zhao (Zhao Feiyan) were such that she was nominated empress in 16 BCE. Both she and her sister Zhao Zhaoyi lived in extravagant style, but neither bore Chengdi the son that the empire needed so desperately. Two girls of even lower class, however, succeeded in so doing; their two infant boys were done to death by the Zhao sisters, or so our sources tell us. How far Chengdi himself was complicit in this crime may not be known.¹¹ It is hard to think that any concerned parent (especially a parent longing for a legitimate heir) would not have inquired as to how the boys had met their ends, but it could be that Chengdi learned of the deaths only after the deeds had been accomplished.

Two dire events marred the early years of the reign: widespread floods in 30 BCE and the coincidence of a solar eclipse and an earthquake in 29 BCE.¹² Such disasters presented officials with a golden opportunity to protest the conduct of public affairs; so too did the tales that circulated about the emperor's activities outside the palace. As a result, we may read the sharpest criticism ever offered to a Western Han emperor, or, perhaps, to any emperor in any dynasty. (See, for example, Gu Yong's

memorial, translated in Liu Tseng-kuei's chapter in this volume.) Altogether Gu Yong put forward three long essays, the first following the events of 29 BCE and the other two in 15 and 12 BCE.¹³

As early as 29 BCE, Gu Yong warned Chengdi against the malign influence that some women could exercise, to the ruin of the court and dynasty. Gu besought the emperor to heed warnings that were manifest in the abnormalities of nature; the emperor should attend to his duties and responsibilities single-mindedly, so as to ensure the succession. This would require him to desist from indulgences, licentious behavior, and certain types of musical spectacles and entertainments. He should take care to appoint men of true experience to office, rejecting those poorly qualified or those whose membership in a prominent faction was their main qualification for office. He should dismiss officials who oppressed their subjects and entrust the government to those who cared for the welfare of the population. Finally, he should reduce taxes.

Gu Yong returned to his themes in the 15 BCE memorial.¹⁴ He referred to the circumstances in which dynasties changed, quoting from the *Changes*, the *Documents*, and the *Odes*, if not the *Annals* classic.¹⁵ Women had no right to take part in public affairs, he wrote. After all, the Jianshi and Heping periods (32–25 BCE) had seen the disruption wrought by the Xu and the Ban families, thanks to the unmatched favoritism they enjoyed, but the present situation, with the Zhao family in high favor, was infinitely worse. The women and their families were abandoning traditional models of conduct; the consort family members and their allies held posts and titles to which they were not suited; their pride and abuse of authority lay beyond the constraint of the regular officials.

Gu Yong described some of the cruelties being practiced. A pit had been dug in the women's quarters of the palace, and victims were ordered to climb up greased poles that were set over fires burning in the pit. Somehow (and the text is far from clear at this point), this sort of activity was designed either to requite good deeds or to settle scores, on behalf of the Zhao and Li families.¹⁶ Fair-minded officials were brought to trial, while innocent persons were arrested and flogged to secure confessions. Gu then turned to Chengdi's part:

A king must first cut himself off from Heaven before Heaven will cast him off. Your Majesty has abandoned that most honorable way of life that befits a lord of all being, and you take pleasure in the degraded activities of commoners. Not satisfied with the glories of your high and mighty title, you choose to be called by the mean expressions used by low-class people. You think very highly of people of that sort, while it maybe they have no sense of what is right and are of quite an inferior type. That is the very type of person whom you have assembled as your personal guests. Very often you leave the safe haven of your palace to take yourself away, day and night, in the company of your low-class friends to make up a party in any sort of order, just like a flock of crows. You drink

yourselves stupid in other peoples' homes, whether those of officials or not. You sit around in groups with your clothing in no fit state, your faces flushed, and all ideas of good behavior have flown to the winds. It is all utter chaos with nothing tabooed. You are at it nonstop, given over to your pleasures. Day and night you are settled on the road. Meanwhile the guards on duty stand to arms at the gates and doors of your halls keeping watch over an empty palace, and not one of your officials, of high or low rank, has the faintest idea of where you are. And all this has been going on for years.¹⁷

Gu Yong further complained of the emperor's extravagance and the consequent impoverishment of the people, as illustrated in the abortive scheme to construct his mausoleum at Changling;¹⁸ Changling had required levies of conscript labor and high rates of taxation, also the desecration of existing graves. Gu called on Chengdi to take a hard look at the historical lessons to be gleaned from the distant past, from Xia to Qin. Chengdi must make an effort to act like a king. He should give up slumming and granting official appointments where they were inappropriate; he should reduce the number of slaves, carriages, and horses kept in the Northern Palace. Along with the other pleasures that he should forego, he should refuse any requests from the women's quarters and put a stop to that pit and its cruelties.

The third of Gu's addresses, dated to 12 BCE, reportedly made a deep impression on Chengdi.¹⁹ In this rebuke, Gu Yong stated bluntly that the rule of the realm was instituted not for the benefit of the Son of Heaven but for that of the people who lived within it. He reminded Chengdi how that rule could move from one ruling house to another,²⁰ and he called for charity in place of extravagance.

Du Qin, whose grandfather and father had both risen to become Imperial Counselors, had been voicing much the same opinions.²¹ Du called on Chengdi to take warning from historical examples and he cited Kongzi (Confucius) to reinforce his views.²² The emperor should put his marital affairs in order, refrain from extravagance, stop his incognito visits outside the palace, and instead personally attend to affairs of state. Du spelled out some of the dangers that would otherwise arise: flatterers would gain favor while honest men would be driven out.

To the question of how far these charges were overstated, it is notable that some of them were directed against a member of the historian's own family; that Ban Gu had nevertheless felt it necessary to include them perhaps argues in favor of their veracity. There is also some measure of agreement in the charges that were raised. Both Gu Yong and Du Qin protested the extravagance of the Changling mausoleum, for example. In his first address to the young Chengdi in 29 BCE, Gu Yong included citations or allusions to the *Odes* and to various histories;²³ Heaven had issued abnormalities of nature by way of warning. If we may speculate, such advice may well have irked the young Liu Ao, then in his early twenties and perhaps thinking himself a grown-up. We read of Gu

Yong complaining that his own advice was being ignored, while others were avoiding discussion of pressing matters at court.

These accounts leave us with the problem of reconciling two opposing views of Chengdi's character and behavior. Aware of the paucity of evidence with which to assess the performance of any Han emperor, let us nonetheless speculate about Chengdi's conduct. "Easygoing he was and fond of literary phrases," as one short note by Ban Gu tells us.²⁴ He did his duty at court, a young man laboring under the need to attend long, tedious ceremonies, even if he doubted their value or purpose. He perhaps grew weary of these incessant lessons of the past his teachers had inculcated. Frustrated by the demands of life at court, and longing to escape, he may have sought his pleasures elsewhere, free from supervision, and in so doing laid himself open to the influences of whomever captured his fancy. As a young man he was perhaps impulsive; there are also signs that he was gullible and vacillating.²⁵ Gu Yong and Du Qin held the interests of the empire at heart, we are told, and they wrote as they did in real fear of what might lie ahead. By contrast, members of the Ban family would have borne in mind that their relative Ban Jieyu, a woman of high talent,²⁶ had Chengdi to thank for saving her from serious punishment.

Aside from these criticisms of Chengdi's personal behavior, there was the question of the survival of Han to consider. It was in Chengdi's time that Gan Zhongke, a native of Qi, fabricated two predictive texts,²⁷ stating flatly that "the house of Han confronts the end-time ordained by Heaven and Earth, so a renewal of the mandate received from Heaven is due; the Lord of Heaven (Tian Di) has ordered Red Essence (Chi Jing Zi), a man of perfect attainment, to descend and convey this message." Such a thought many deemed treasonable, and Liu Xiang and Liu Xin were quick to offer heavy criticism of it.²⁸

Gan Zhongke and Xia Heliang, who followed him, were playing with fire. Gan raised two questions: first, who the proper models were in history (a hotly debated question); and second, how dynastic authority was transferred from one house or person to another. No consensus had been reached regarding the first issue. Different texts referred variously to the Three True Kings (San Wang), the Five Lords (Wu Di), and the Nine Sovereigns (Jiu Huang), without even specifying the same monarchs.²⁹ According to the scheme set out in the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*)—and how far this was generally accepted in Chengdi's era cannot be known—two lines of transmission derived from the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi), one of which led to Yao and the other to Shun, with the two lines separated by three generations.³⁰

A claim that the Han ruling house could trace its ancestry to the sage-ruler Yao did not arise until comparatively late in Western Han, probably for the first time in a statement made by Sui Meng in 78 BCE, who claimed to be following his former teacher Dong Zhongshu.³¹ Later on, during Chengdi's reign and those of his immediate successors, a similar claim was reiterated by Liu Xiang, Liu Xin, and by Ban Gu.³²

Closely associated with this issue went the claim advanced by some that a dynastic house enjoyed its rightful position thanks to the patronage of that one of the

Five Phases that was assumed to be dominant; but belief in a Five Phases (Wuxing) sequence was not reflected in official pronouncements until comparatively late in Western Han, in Yuandi's reign of 48–33 BCE.³³ We find Du Qin and Gu Yong drawing on the concept before 16 BCE,³⁴ with Gu alluding to it in his memorial of 12 BCE, but it was not until after Chengdi's reign that we hear of a definite assertion that Yao had taken his place under the aegis of Fire and with it Red, as did Han.³⁵ Probably only once previously do we hear a statement that the Han ruling house was a descendant of Yao. We find Du Qin and Gu Yong drawing on the Five Phases schema³⁶ in Chengdi's reign, but notably, the extant sources register no mention prior to Chengdi's reign of the view that Yao had ruled under the aegis of the phases of Fire and Red, nor of the Western Han rulers styling themselves as Yao's descendants.³⁷ Such a retrospective claim may have been made after Chengdi's reign, possibly to counter Wang Mang's determination to adopt Earth as his patron.³⁸ Evidence has yet to be found to show that Five Phases thought played an important part in the discussion of dynastic fortunes during Chengdi's reign.³⁹ Certainly, there is no overt reference to it in Ban Biao's "Wangming lun" ("On the Mandate of Kings"). The official adoption of Fire and Red by Guangwudi was dated to 26 CE.⁴⁰

Yet a third scheme for regulating the dynastic-rule sequences (one that differed fundamentally from both the *Shiji* sequences and Wang Mang's claim), was being mentioned by certain prominent persons during Chengdi's reign and shortly afterward. This was the Three Dispensations (San Tong), to which Gu Yong once made reference.⁴¹ This sequence is described in considerable detail in the extant *Chunqiu fanlu* (*Elegant Crown for the Annals*), ascribed to Dong Zhongshu, though in a chapter that almost certainly postdates Dong.⁴² In this dynastic cycle, the Three Dispensations (signified as Black, White, and Red)⁴³ followed in sequence, each characterized by its distinct relationship with Heaven and a method of guiding human activities, for example, by its regulation of the calendar, choice of music, particular selection of official titles, and correct ritual forms for religious rites, court ceremonials, and *rites de passage*. According to the Three Dispensations, sacrifices would be offered to no more than two dynastic lines. (Once a cycle was completed, rulers would be elevated to a still higher position, perhaps as one of the Nine Sovereigns, beyond human worship.)

Perhaps the most controversial matters to arise during both the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi concerned religious practices. By now the number of shrines built to perpetuate the memory of deceased emperors and their immediate relatives had risen to 176 at Chang'an and 167 in the provinces; each shrine was served with four offerings per day, with others regularly, at the turn of the seasons and the years. Maintenance and security required large numbers of additional servicemen and attendants, such as cooks and musicians. Aware of the huge expenses entailed, Gong Yu and Wei Xuancheng had successfully proposed abolishing some of the shrines during Yuandi's reign. At least some of the old sacrifices were restored when Chengdi, the emperor, was sick, though that restoration failed to stave off his early death in 7 BCE, and so between 7 and 3 BCE,

there followed a series of changes, sometimes abolishing and sometimes restoring the offerings.⁴⁴ (See Tian Tian's chapter in this volume for details.)

Three important controversies engaged a very large number of officials.⁴⁵ First, should the sites for imperial tombs be chosen so as to display the Zhaomu form, which provided for the suspension of shrines after a specified number of generations had passed?⁴⁶ No consensus existed on the related question of whether an emperor was entitled, or perhaps obliged, to offer services to the shrines of five or seven ancestors, nor about the provision that in exceptional circumstances an ancestor should receive special honors, including a special title and receipt of offerings in perpetuity. No one disputed the conferral of these special honors upon Gaozu and Wendi, who were duly entitled Taizu and Taizong, but the court could not agree on the issue of whether Wudi deserved inclusion in this select group. Certainly, part of the conundrum involved the issue of whether personal merit or degree of kinship should be given a higher priority.

Second, we note an equally significant difference of views regarding the imperial cults to the supreme deities.⁴⁷ Western Han had added the worship of a fifth power to the four cultivated by Qin, and from 123 BCE onward the emperor was expected to regularly attend rites addressed to these Five Lords.⁴⁸ Other innovations under Han Wudi included worship of Sovereign Earth (Houtu) from 114 BCE and Grand Unity (Taiyi) from 113 BCE. Wudi had duly presented himself at these ceremonies from time to time, as did his successors Xuandi and Yuandi. But the sites of worship for these three cults all lay some distance from Chang'an.⁴⁹ A major change, suggested by Kuang Heng early in Chengdi's reign, was to introduce the worship of Heaven and Earth, to replace the existing cults to the Five Lords, Sovereign Earth (Houtu), and Taiyi, and to enact the new rites to the south and north of Chang'an city.⁵⁰ The change, which signified a move toward recognizing Zhou as the regime to be respected and emulated, would, not coincidentally, save considerable expense and hardship, for no long journeys outside the capital would be required. At the same time, the new shrines would adopt simpler structures for their altars, in place of the old highly decorated ones. The ceremonies would be conducted with fewer musical spectacles and with earthenware vessels rather than prized bronzes. As it happened, the introduction of the new cults coincided with a violent storm that damaged the site of Sweet Springs (Ganquan), raising the question whether the innovations were responsible for that disaster. Liu Xiang argued forcefully against the changes and the abolition of some of the memorial shrines, on the basis of precedents, but those at court expressed different views on the matter, as reversion to the older sacrifices alternated with restoration of the new cults for some time thereafter.⁵¹

Third, associated with the foregoing were debates over which deities merited service at the imperial level: worship of the Five Lords looked back to Qin rule (when four deities were worshipped), whereas sacrifices to Heaven and Earth were believed to be of Zhou origin. Coupled with the worship of Heaven was the concept of Heaven's Mandate. Curiously, although a few writings of early Western Han had applied this

concept to the pre-imperial kingdoms of the Zhanguo period, it was probably not until the reign of Chengdi's father, Yuandi, that the legitimacy of the Han ruling house was tied to this authority.⁵² Three men whom we have already met—Du Qin, Liu Xiang, and Gu Yong—utilized the rhetoric of Heaven's Mandate as applied to the empire during Chengdi's reign.⁵³

Besides questions concerning the major cults of state, some religious activities called for censure, in part because not a few of their expenses may have devolved on the imperial administration. Early in Chengdi's reign Kuang Heng had proposed a ban on worship at 475 sites where the activities did not conform with formal ritual (*li*); these were described as "illicit cults" (*yin si*); the remaining sites (208 in number), thought to be in conformity, were to continue.⁵⁴ And very shortly after Chengdi's death we read of a salvation cult appealing to the Queen Mother of the West,⁵⁵ which had taken hold in twenty-six commanderies and kingdoms in the east, from which it descended on the capital. Devotees of the cult carried torches and could well have posed a threat to urban areas packed with wooden dwellings. However, no official action was taken to suppress the movement, so far as we know, and it reportedly died out spontaneously.

Intellectual changes accompanied these changes in religious practices. Ban Gu remarks that Dong Zhongshu's efforts were responsible for the promotion of Kongzi's teachings,⁵⁶ and certainly Dong's fifteen citations of the Master in a 134 BCE "response to the throne" offer a sharp contrast to earlier Western Han memorials, which tend to be marked by few citations.⁵⁷ But while allusions to Kongzi occur in decrees in 128 and 123 BCE, it is only during the reign of Chengdi's father, Yuandi (r. 48–33), that these become frequent. For example, both parties to the salt and iron debates of 81 BCE (probably recorded sometime after Xuandi's death in 48 BCE) evidently drew upon sayings ascribed to Kongzi to support their arguments.⁵⁸ And in Chengdi's reign, this trend is evident: Kuang Heng and Du Qin cite Kongzi, as does Liu Xiang, in his *Xinxu* (*New Order*) and *Shuoyuan* (*Profusion of Persuasions*); and it was on the basis of Kongzi's sayings that Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE) modeled some of his most famous writings, especially the *Fayan* (*Exemplary Figures*). Probably the first imperial decree to directly cite Kongzi occurs in 1 CE, in a decree issued by the Grand Empress Dowager Wang Zhengjun.⁵⁹ This trend, like several other developments above, may represent a move away from Qin toward the traditions of Zhou (albeit imagined or reinvented occasionally) under the impetus of the classicists, specialists in traditions who were also invoking the virtues of Zhougong more often.⁶⁰

In his plea to reduce or eliminate some of the expenses involved in the state cults, Kuang Heng called for greater priority to be accorded to what was substantial (*zhi*), with correspondingly less attention to the decorative or ornamental, that is, refinements (*wen*).⁶¹ Perhaps the same motive lay behind his substitutions of prosaic wording for elevated expressions in some of the hymns sung during imperial sacrifices.⁶² His suggestions had wide implications, though our sources do not discuss these in detail. Was it of greater importance to insist on the fundamental purposes of an action, shorn

of elaboration, or to pay greater attention to its refinements? Excessive attention to *wen* could lead to decadence, whereas alternating between the two could maintain balance, in practical terms, not only in the conduct of state rituals, but also at the court. Extravagance in the palace had drawn protests during Yuandi's reign, and Chengdi's critics also called for a return to frugality, that is, to practices based on *zhi*.⁶³

Of course, the same distinction could easily be applied, not only to government budgets, but also to human characters, to compositional styles, and to historical cycles.⁶⁴ By the same scheme, then, the legendary Xia supposedly concentrated on *wen*, and its successor, Yin (i.e., Shang), concentrated on *zhi*, with Zhou reverting to *wen*, as Liu Xiang and others explained.⁶⁵ Du Qin argued that Western Han, as Zhou's successor, ought to return to *zhi*.⁶⁶ Still, an unexplained contradiction may be seen here, in that some who expressed a preference for *zhi* also wished to emulate Zhou, described as favoring *wen* by this theory. The subject recurs in Eastern Han writings, including the *Bohu tong* (*Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall*) and a later text, both of which mention the existence of two opposing groups of specialists, the substance or *zhi* proponents versus the *wen* proponents (*wenjia*).⁶⁷

At a heated moment in a debate found in the *Yantie lun* (*Debates on Salt and Iron*) compilation, the spokesman for the government has been reduced to silence, and the clerk to the Chancellor steps in to calm the troubled waters, asking, "What is the point of sticking rigidly to the ways of old and refusing to recognize the needs of the present?"⁶⁸ This was not the first nor the last time that one of those taking part in the debates raised the basic question of whether it was essential to follow strictly the models left by earlier dynasties or permissible to introduce innovations that adapted to changed circumstances. That dilemma confronted the First Emperor of Qin: whether to govern his empire by entrusting parts of it to vassal kings or to retain direct control over his lands via the commanderies.⁶⁹ The question was of major concern in the imperial rescripts to which Dong Zhongshu responded, in Wudi's reign,⁷⁰ and the theme recurs in many passages in the *Yantie lun* and the *Bohu tong*. But advocates for the antique models faced several problems. If the three ages of Xia, Yin, and Zhou were equally exemplary, why had all three dynasties come to an end, and why had two of them found it necessary to institute changes from their predecessors? Given the different types of examples seen in the distant past, which was the right one to adopt for Han? And, above all, if none of the antique models was perfectly suited to the changed circumstances of the present, how was the ruling house and its court to avoid huge disruptions when reverting to past models? Before the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, several advisers offered solutions.⁷¹ However, such answers could hardly settle all the controversies that arose during the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, including which divinities should be addressed. Perhaps the propensity to cite Kongzi and the classics arose from the outspoken wish of some thinkers to promote the examples of the pre-Qin eras.

In any case, these controversies engaged the best minds serving the government during late Western Han, as did the less theoretical problems of maintaining viable

living standards for the empire's population and dealing with the non-Han peoples and their leaders. The following discussion therefore outlines some of the main economic issues of the time. An imperial government required large numbers of conscript servicemen for the basic work of keeping waterways, bridges, and roads in working order; for flood control measures; for transporting staple goods from farm to official granaries; and for constructing the imperial palaces, tombs, and mausoleum towns. Because the conscripts so engaged, having left their work in the fields, accordingly required a number of necessities from others, the administration's excessive deployment of manpower in this way could spell hardship or worse, and it might foment insurrections. It is extremely unlikely that officials in either the central government or the localities had sufficiently accurate information about local conditions to strike the right balance between calling on manpower when it was practical or essential to do so and refraining from call-ups in less essential matters.

Two opposing viewpoints were current: one favored positive and intensive attempts to control and coordinate the commoners' conscript work by direct orders; the second espoused creating as much freedom as possible for private enterprise and initiative, as is evident from a number of sources, including officials' memorials and above all the *Yantie lun*. The difference was exemplified in the scheme to establish storehouses for staples, especially grains, with a view to stabilizing prices in times of glut or famine. The basic proposal conceived by Geng Shouchang (fl. 57–52 BCE) was already in operation during Xuandi's reign (54 BCE), but parts or all of it were abolished in 44 BCE, during Yuandi's reign, when different opinions prevailed (though this abolition possibly was reversed, according to Liu Tseng-kuei's chapter in this volume).⁷² The two viewpoints had a direct bearing on other economic issues: the very uneven distribution of landholdings, the encouragement of industry and commerce versus agriculture, the operation of the mines, and the uses of money.

In a famous passage, Dong Zhongshu had complained about the great discrepancy between the land area held by the rich and powerful versus the inadequate amount available for the peasantry.⁷³ There were, in fact, at least five different ways in which land could be held: (1) as public fields (*gong tian*) bestowed by order of the emperor; (2) as registered fields (*ming tian*), registered in the name of an individual; (3) as land grants accompanying the bestowal of orders of honor (*jue*); (4) as lands by purchase, after Shang Yang's reforms of 350 BCE (not rescinded); and (5) as reclaimed lands. Large landholdings could be acquired in several of the ways mentioned above, with some holdings lying in different localities.⁷⁴ An attempt made circa 5 BCE by the Chancellor Kong Guang, He Wu, and Shi Dan to prevent a further increase in large landholdings was thwarted by the Ding and Fu consort families, among others, as well as by the emperor's favorite, Dong Xian, all of whom stood to lose heavily if large landholdings were limited.⁷⁵

Repeatedly officials complained that too many people were deserting from the fundamental work of the fields (*ben*) and chasing after the less important occupations

(*mo*), that is, those of industry and commerce. The temptation to leave the farm is easily understood, as it promised freedom from the farmer's unremittingly hard work in exchange for a more comfortable and possibly more lucrative life in a town, even though this might mean stricter official surveillance. Shang Yang had taken steps to penalize the presence or retention of more than one able-bodied adult male within each household, a measure doubtless intended to push land-reclamation efforts,⁷⁶ and we do not know how long such a regulation persisted into Qin or Western Han. But such a regulation, if in existence during Western Han, could well have encouraged the farmers' second or third sons to seek their livelihood wherever they could best find it—perhaps in an iron foundry or pottery, in a market or on the road, with a traveling merchant—at the cost of productive work that increased yields on the land.

Since Wudi's reign, government officials had been responsible for managing the salt and iron mines and their products, with conscript laborers doing the work, so that individuals could not grow rich from owning or working such resources. Proposals to rethink the government monopolies had come in 81 BCE, but the monopolies were not abolished then;⁷⁷ only when the question next arose, in 44 BCE, were they abandoned briefly, to be reestablished again within three years.

In a series of pronouncements made during the early years of Yuandi's reign, Gong Yu had provided an overview of the weaknesses that he saw undermining the empire.⁷⁸ Strongly worded as his rhetoric was, Gong supported it by the figures that he gave; his statements need not necessarily be dismissed as exaggerations designed for political purposes, and they may well apply to conditions during Chengdi's reign.⁷⁹ Gong Yu protested the luxurious way of life in the palaces, compared with earlier reigns. He complained that too much manpower and expense went into operating the three government agencies for clothing production in Qi (Shandong Province) and to procuring gold and silver wares from the west. The poll tax on children was imposed when they were far too young, leading to widespread infanticide. And while large numbers of conscripts and convicts were put to work mining copper and iron, illegal minting was by no means uncommon. Rich men were hoarding coins; merchants were charging high rates of interest on which they paid no taxes. At the same time, farmers led a miserable life of hardship and privation, so that many were leaving agriculture and taking to industry or commerce, and the rate of crime was rising.

All these regrettable conditions could be traced to a love for cash, Gong Yu argued; hence his own proposal, which called for nothing less than reducing the use of coinage wherever possible. Taxes should be raised and salaries paid in staples; agencies for the collection of pearls, jade, and silver should be abolished. The garrisons at some palaces should see their numbers reduced to half, which would reduce the need for state conscription; large numbers of slaves should be manumitted and as commoners serve as guardsmen on the defense lines. For good measure, Gong Yu added bitter attacks on the way some officials were engaging in trade and on the well-established practice of redeeming some criminal punishments by cash payments.⁸⁰

Conclusion

Historians of Western and Eastern Han have concentrated largely on personalities, incidents, or dramatic developments, with the result that they have often overlooked the years of Chengdi and his father. However, the twenty-six years of Chengdi's reign witnessed impressive initiatives that in some ways inaugurated new modes of thought—initiatives that marked a distinct change from earlier times, affecting the course of Chinese culture and laying the groundwork for practices in the Xin dynasty of Wang Mang, in Eastern Han, and beyond. Significantly, it seems that during Chengdi's reign those discussing such issues were not at all constrained by a perceived need to conform with existing practices or inhibited by fears that their critiques would lead to their own downfalls.

Opinions of Chengdi's character that were expressed within a few decades of his death or perhaps a century later differed widely. Possibly these differences depended on the nature of the sources on which they were based and their degree of inbuilt prejudice. Certainly, the discrepancies have left a number of unresolved questions for historians. The readiness of the *Hanshu* compilers, writing more than a hundred years after Chengdi, to include the unprecedentedly virulent criticisms of an emperor and his immediate family members may suggest an exceptionally high degree of bias. Unfortunately, since we possess no other primary sources against which to measure the picture that we receive of Chengdi and his inner circle, we cannot know whether to confirm, modify, or correct the picture.

Despite these weaknesses, we are probably right to conclude that only a few Han emperors played a strong role in deciding imperial policies or leading others to implement them. Certainly no claim can be made that Chengdi took a leading part in such matters, nor did he take a personal part in the discussions provoked by the problems of his day. It was apparently thanks to the strong will and powerful influence of Wang Zhengjun, Empress of Yuandi and mother to Chengdi, that so many members of the Wang consort clan held commanding positions in Chang'an's palaces and offices. But it is far from certain that we can attribute those appointments to a determination to displace the house of Liu by that of Wang, and it would be wrong to read those appointments as a mere prelude to Wang Mang's establishment of his own empire. Admittedly, the standard histories leave that impression, but that is understandable, since these accounts were compiled long after the "restoration" of the house of Liu. At the same time, some elements in these accounts suggest that the empress dowager, as well as the four Wangs given the title of Marshal of State (Da Sima) during Chengdi's reign,⁸¹ intended to strengthen the Han dynasty at a time when it was perceived to be in acute danger, rescuing it from all challenges.

Long after Wang Mang received the title of Lord Securing the Han (An Han Gong) in 1 CE, we should note the force with which the empress tried to refuse to hand over the Han imperial seals to one of Wang Mang's emissaries. She also steadfastly refused to comply with the new dynastic color that Wang Mang adopted in place of that of

Han,⁸² a clear sign that she disapproved of him. Then, too, at the death of Chengdi, the strength of the Wang family gave way to that of other families for a time.⁸³ Whatever intentions the empress dowager and the Wangs may have had, other consort families also affected palace decisions or the offices of state, even if the standard histories underplay any beneficial influences by her or others. That said, Wang Zhengjun's firmness of character stands in contrast to Yuandi's nonchalance, Chengdi's vacillations, and the comparative weakness of Chengdi's two successors, Aidi and Pingdi, who acceded to the throne at the age of perhaps eighteen and no more than seven years.

If historians are to set Chengdi's reign in context, we may revert to the contrast provided by his grandfather, Xuandi, who began to take a direct part in government twelve years after his accession, in 66 BCE, and whose decrees and choice of regnal titles demonstrate a self-confidence and pride in the achievements of empire. A completely different mood prevailed during the Yuandi years, with his decrees alluding to the multiple natural disasters overtaking the empire and the consequent fear of cosmic imbalances and economic pressures. Still, under Yuandi there was as yet no fear that the Han ruling house would come to an end, owing to the lack of an heir to the throne. By contrast, officials of Chengdi's time, being conscious of just such a possibility, were apt to react against the austerities of Yuandi's days. As we have seen, some blessed with a high intellect and erudition were pondering the dynasty's problems and ready to reassess the basic ideas and institutions inherited from Chengdi's predecessors, despite their earlier training. Could they continue to trust the effectiveness of Western Han traditions, in the face of the current social and economic conditions? Or was it precisely the failure of Western Han traditions to abide by the lessons of antiquity that had led to the present difficulties? At this time of perplexity and fears on behalf of the ruling house, three men of great erudition—Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE), Liu Xin (46 BCE–23 CE), and Huan Tan (43 BCE–28 CE)—evidently concluded that the only hope for the Liu clan's continued future lay in the hands of a forceful member of the Wang family; hence their loyal support for Wang Mang.

Notes

- 1 *Hanshu* 10.302.
- 2 Zhaodi (r. 87–74 CE), who acceded at the age of seven and died at nineteen, had been subject to the will of those around him. His immediate successor, Liu He, had seized the opportunity to indulge in the libertine frolics of youth, as we are told, perhaps with some exaggeration, to be deposed after a mere twenty-seven days.
- 3 See *Hanshu* 82.3376 for Yuandi's devotion to music and other amusements during the period 38–34 BCE.
- 4 This uncle was a second Wang Shang whose personal name had a different Chinese character than the Chancellor's; the second Wang Shang is identified as Wang Shang (2) in Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary*.
- 5 Ban Biao was quoting, or possibly misquoting, from the *Analects* 10.12a (Shisan jing zhushu ed.); see Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 236.

- 6 For allusions here to the *Odes* and the *Liji*, see Dubs 1938–55, vol. 3, 418.
- 7 *Hanshu* 10.330. For the authorship of this part of the *Hanshu* by Ban Biao, see *Hanshu* 9.299n1.
- 8 Liu Kang, born to Yuandi's consort Fu Zhaoyi. See *Hanshu* 10.301.
- 9 *Hanshu* 100B.4239. This is explained as due to the activities of the Wang family. See *Hanshu buzhu* 100B.4a for an explanation of Chengdi's failings.
- 10 *Hanshu* 10.318. See also *Hanshu* 97B.3984–85.
- 11 *Hanshu* 97B.3990–94. Cao Gong, daughter of one of the slaves in the palace, claimed that Chengdi had made her pregnant and that she gave birth to a boy in 12 BCE; Xu Meiren bore her child in 11 BCE. For an account of the disappearance of the children, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 610, s.v. Xie Guang.
- 12 *Hanshu* 10.306–7, 60.267 (for Du Qin's views on these events), 85.3443 (for those of Gu Yong). See Loewe 1974, 154–55, for the floods of 30 BCE, and Nylan's chapter in this volume on supplying the capital with water and food.
- 13 *Hanshu* 85.3443–50 (for 29 BCE), 85.3458–64 (for the response following the reported appearance of a black dragon in 16 BCE and the death of Wang Yin in 15 BCE), and 85.3465–72 (for Gu Yong's statement in 12 BCE). At the time of his first protest, Gu Yong was a clerk chosen to serve in the office of the Imperial Counsellor (Yushi Dafu); later he was appointed assistant to the Commissioner for Ceremonial, Regional Inspector of Liangzhou, and Governor of Beidi (12 BCE). See also *Hanshu* 27B(1).1368.
- 14 *Hanshu* 85.3458–64.
- 15 These are four of the Five Classics, the *Changes* (*Yi*), *Documents* (*Shangshu*), *Odes* (*Shi*), and *Annals* (*Chunqiu*), respectively.
- 16 Ban Jieyu had brought a girl named Li Ping into the palace, and it was presumably her family that was involved. *Hanshu* 97B.3984.
- 17 This reprimand is also included, with slight variations, in *Hanshu* 27B(1).1368. According to *Hanshu* 10.316, Chengdi made the first of his incognito excursions outside the palace in 20 BCE. For an example of an earlier emperor (Wudi) who engaged in such incognito journeys, see *Hanshu* 65.2847 (speaking of 138 BCE).
- 18 *Hanshu* 85.3462.
- 19 *Hanshu* 85.3465–72. For a translation, see this volume pp. 296–302.
- 20 He cited the theory of the Three Dispensations (*San Tong*); see below.
- 21 See *Hanshu* 19B.786, 810.
- 22 *Hanshu* 60.2671–72.
- 23 Gu Yong called on the lessons of history, such as the legendary infatuation for Bao Si that doomed King You (r. 781–771 BCE) of Western Zhou, supposedly, and led to his dynasty's ruin.
- 24 *Hanshu* 85.3465. This throwaway opinion of Ban Gu does not quite fit with the judgment expressed by his father, Ban Biao (see above).
- 25 See *Hanshu* 27C(2).1504 for Gu Yong's wish to prevent the Empress Xu from exerting undue influence on Chengdi; *Hanshu* 36.1950, 1957, for his inability to act in accordance with advice that he appreciated; *Hanshu* 70.3024 for vacillation.
- 26 See *Hanshu* 97B.3983–87 for examples of her quick wit and spontaneous composition of a *fu* poem.
- 27 *Hanshu* 75.3192. These texts were entitled *Tian guan li* and *Bao yuan tai ping jing*, the latter in twelve chapters (*juan*). See Loewe 1974, 278–81.
- 28 Gan Zhongke was duly charged but died of an illness before being sentenced. Nevertheless, Gan's basic message would be reiterated during Aidi's reign and it carried sufficient weight to induce the government to introduce three changes, to be revoked soon thereafter. These changes included a change of the regnal title (*nianhao*) and of the emperor's title, also the division of the twelve hours of the day and night into 120 rather than 100 divisions. Support for the

message came from Li Xun. Later, to aid his claim for advancement in 5 BCE Wang Mang called on the support of Gan Zhongke. See *Hanshu* 99A.4094.

- 29 See Loewe 2011, 302–7, for this highly complex issue.
- 30 *Shiji*, chaps. 1 and 2. In the second scheme (claimed by Wang Mang, possibly at the suggestion of Liu Xin, though we cannot know at this remove whether this was original to Liu Xin), a single line descended from Huangdi, in which Shun followed immediately after Yao. See *Hanshu* 99B.4105 and 21B.1011. In his historical reconstruction in the *Shijing* (*Passage of the Generations*), Liu Xin repeats the two lines of transmission, citing a source entitled *Dixi* (*Hanshu* 21B.1013).
- 31 *Hanshu* 75.3154. By Eastern Han this assertion had become generally accepted, in support of the claim that the Han house possessed the right to rule. See Ban Gu's statement in *Hanshu* 1B.82; *Hanshu buzhu* 75.1b, note; *Hanshu* 100A.4208 (statement by Ban Biao); *Hou Hanshu* 23.798 (unstated speaker in 29 CE); *Hou Hanshu* 36.1237 (Jia Kui in 76 CE); and *Dongguan Hanji* (comp. Ban Gu et al.) 1.6b.
- 32 See *Hanshu* 25B.1270–71, where the compiler of the *Hanshu* reports the views of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin; compare *Hanshu* 21B.1011–13, where the sequence of monarchs in Liu Xin's *Shijing* implies Han's possession of Fire. See also *Hou Hanshu* 1A.27, for adoption of Fire as the dynastic phase in 26 CE; *Hanshu* 1B.82 for Ban Gu's statement. At a later stage, Jia Kui (30–101 CE) argued for the value of the *Zuozhuan* on the grounds that, while the Five Classics offered no proof for the statements of *tu* and *chen* writings that the Liu family was descended from Yao, the *Zuozhuan* was the sole text with a clear statement of this. *Hou Hanshu* 36.1237. In contrast, Wang Mang specifically claimed Shun as his ancestor; just as Shun had succeeded legitimately to Yao, so had Wang Mang taken over quite correctly from the family house of Liu (*Hanshu* 99B.4106).
- 33 See *Hanshu* 75.3172 (for a mention by Yi Feng, dated to 47 BCE), 73.3122 (mention by Kuang Heng, dated to 36 BCE), and 9.295 (decree of 35 BCE). For the question of Qin's adoption of the patron Water, see Loewe 2004, 497–505; and for possible moves by the Western Han up to 104 BCE, see *ibid.*, 505–13.
- 34 See *Hanshu* 75.3154 for the mention by Sui Hong (Meng), who was put to death in about 78 BCE. For Du Qin's comments, see *Hanshu* 27C(2).1504 and 60.2671 (in 29 BCE); for Gu Yong's comments, see *Hanshu* 85.3457 (before 16 BCE) and 85.3468 (in 12 BCE).
- 35 *Hanshu* 27B(2).1413, 97B.4113; *Hou Hanshu* 23.798. For Ban Gu's assertion that both Liu Xiang and Liu Xin subscribed to this theory, see *Hanshu* 25B.1271.
- 36 For references by Du Qin, see *Hanshu* 27C(2).1504 and 60.2671 (in 29 BCE); for those by Gu Yong, *Hanshu* 85.3457 (before 16 BCE) and 85.3468 (12 BCE).
- 37 Except for the statement by Sui Meng (d. 78 BCE); *Hanshu* 75. 3154.
- 38 See Loewe 2004, 515.
- 39 For a slightly later reference, by Yang Xiong, see his *Taixuan jing*, trans. Nylan 1993.
- 40 *Hou Hanshu* 1A.27.
- 41 In 12 BCE; see *Hanshu* 85.3467. Other early references to the scheme are seen in *Hanshu* 67.2926 (by Kuang Heng, before 29 BCE), 36.1950 (by Liu Xiang, 16 BCE), 67.2924–25 (by Mei Fu 梅福, ca. 12 BCE), and 10.328 (an imperial statement of 8 BCE).
- 42 For the San Tong, see Loewe 2011, 296–302. See also *Chunqiu fanlu* 7/23.183–213 (“Sandai gai zhi zhi wen”), trans. Loewe 2011, 317–34.
- 43 Yin (i.e., Shang) was identified with White, King Wen of Zhou with Red, and the realm of Lu with Black. Some apparently considered the rule of Lu to be that of the uncrowned king, Kongzi.
- 44 For this subject, see Loewe 1974, 179–82.
- 45 See Loewe 1994a, 286–99.

- 46 For Zhaomu, see Loewe 1994a, 276–80. The question could equally well have arisen because, for the latest imperial burial, that of Xuandi, it had not been possible to follow Zhaomu, and there was therefore the question of whether this should be attempted the next time. One should note, however, that Chinese scholars are deeply divided over the question of the possible adoption of the Zhaomu principle in Western Han: see, for example, Liu and Li 1987, 147, and the editors of *Han Duling lingyuan yizhi*, who presume the adoption; versus Huang Zhanyue 2005 and others who take the opposite view. The present writer is inclined to the view that, despite a number of difficulties that have yet to be explained, attempts were generally made to follow Zhaomu, but this became impossible when succession to the throne did not accord with the sequence of generations that Zhaomu required (so that it was not possible to practice this for Wendi, who was of the same generation as Huidi, or for Xuandi). There is nothing to show that the Eastern Han emperors were buried in accordance with the principle. See Li Hengmei 1992 and *Biographical Dictionary*, 215–16.
- 47 See Loewe 1974, 166–69.
- 48 To be distinguished from the Wu Di, or Five Sovereigns, of mythical history.
- 49 At Yong for the Five Lords, at Fenyin for Sovereign Earth, and at Ganquan for Grand Unity.
- 50 *Hanshu* 25B.1253, 1254; Loewe 1974, 170–79.
- 51 *Hou Hanshu* (treatises) 7.3157, 3159. At a later date, in 5 CE, Pingdi would bring back services to Heaven and Earth, and they were duly instituted by the Eastern Han founder at Luoyang in 26 CE, along with those to the Five Lords.
- 52 See Loewe 2004, 432, 441. For an early reference by Sui Hong (Meng) in 78 BCE, see *Hanshu* 75.3154. For Kuang Heng's mention of Tian Ming during Yuandi's reign, see *Hanshu* 81.3338.
- 53 See *Hanshu* 60.2671 (for Du Qin), 36.1950 (for Liu Xiang), and 85.3464 (for Gu Yong).
- 54 *Hanshu* 25B.1257, 81.3344.
- 55 There are three accounts of this incident: *Hanshu* 11.342, 26.1311, and 27C(1).1476. See Loewe 1979, 98–101.
- 56 *Hanshu* 56.2525. See also Loewe 2011, 159–64.
- 57 On this rhetorical change, see Wang Qicai 2009.
- 58 The *Yantie lun* is best read as a text composed to support the move to abolish government monopolies in 44 BCE, and possibly Gu Yong's arguments are cited there. Its dating further depends on a crucial reading of one passage that appears differently in different recensions of the text. See *ECT*, 478–79.
- 59 *Hanshu* 99A.4049.
- 60 See Elman and Kern 2010; also Loewe 2004, esp. chap. 14, for details.
- 61 For this subject, see Loewe 2011, 275–86. For an early reference, see *Shiji* 47.1936.
- 62 *Hanshu* 25B.1256 and 22.1057. Interpretation of the passage in *Hanshu* 22 and its textual arrangement are by no means certain, as seen in the extensive notes to *Hanshu buzhu* 22.24a; see also Kern 1997, 211, 218, 299.
- 63 For calls for economies in Yuandi's reign, see *Hanshu* 72.3069 (by Gong Yu) and 81.3337 (by Kuang Heng); for reductions that were actually effected, see *Hanshu* 9.285, 24A.1142, 72.3073, 3079. For allusions to extravagances during Chengdi's reign, see *Hanshu* 36.1950, 60.2672, 85.3464.
- 64 Yang Xiong applied the distinction to human beings, writing that attention to substance is essential, while pattern may be no more than a cloak for practicing deception. See *Fayan* 9.2a; Wang Rongbao, *Fayan yishu* 4, 71. See also Loewe 2011, 282n83.
- 65 *Shuoyuan* 19.1b (“Xiu wen”) and 20.2a (“Fan zhi”).
- 66 *Hanshu* 60.2673–74.
- 67 *Bohu tong* 1.6 (“Jue”), 8.361 (“San zheng”). Compare parts of the *Chunqiu fanlu* that can hardly have derived from Dong Zhongshu; see *pian* 2 (“Yu bei”), discussed in Loewe 2011, 230, 284. It is also mentioned in fragments of the apocryphal writings. See Loewe 2011, 285.

- 68 *Yantie lun* 5.332 (chap. 28, “Guo ji”). See also *Yantie lun* 9.654 (chap. 54, “Lun zi”).
- 69 *Shiji* 6.238–39; and see Bodde, in Twitchett and Loewe 1986, 54–55. On another occasion, Qin’s strict rules allegedly ordered dire punishment for those who “relied on the past to curse the present” (*yi gu fei jin*). See *Shiji* 6.255; but see also Nylan, forthcoming b.
- 70 See Loewe 2011, 86–100, 152–56.
- 71 Dong Zhongshu’s answer was that those who deserved the title of king did not change their principles but only their ways of implementing them (*Hanshu* 56.2518). At much the same time, Wang Hui cited an old saying that the Five Lords (Wu Di) had not received the ritual rules from one another, nor did the Three True Kings (San Wang) restore the use of their predecessors’ music (*Hanshu* 52.2400).
- 72 For the establishment of the so-called Ever-Level Granaries (Changping Cang), see *Hanshu* 8.268, 24A.1141, which describe their benefits for the populace. For their abolition, see *Hanshu* 24A.1142, on the grounds that the system resulted in officials competing for profit with the people. But see also Liu Tseng-kuei’s chapter in this volume, which speaks of a possible restoration of this system, at least in some commanderies.
- 73 *Hanshu* 24A.1137. For Shang Yang’s reforms regarding property by purchase, see *ibid.*
- 74 For example, at the outset of the Han empire, conferment of the nineteenth-highest order of Guannei Hou brought with it tenure of 95 *qing* of land, with 1 *qing* measuring approximately 57 English acres; those with Gongshi, the lowest order of honor, received 1.5 *qing*. See *Zhangjia-shan Han mu zhujian*, Statutes, strip 310, Transcriptions 175. The technical term for landholdings in noncontiguous sites was *bingjian* or *jianbing*.
- 75 *Hanshu* 24A.1142.
- 76 *Shiji* 68.2230. The precise extent of the proposed restriction is far from clear.
- 77 *Hanshu* 24B.1164, 24B.1176, 7.223–24, 9.285, 9.291. The monopolies had been introduced thanks to the advocacy of Sang Hongyang, finally appointed Imperial Counsellor in 87 BCE, and others. The proposals for abolition (some of which came in 81 BCE, during the salt and iron debates) did not carry the day at Xuandi’s court.
- 78 The proposals to abolish the monopolies came from Gong Yu. At the time of Yuandi’s accession, Gong Yu was Advisory Counsellor (Jian Dafu); he was promoted Counsellor of the Palace (Guanglu Dafu) in 44 BCE and very shortly afterward Imperial Counsellor, only to die within a few months.
- 79 See the series of statements in his name in *Hanshu* 72.3069–79. Many of Gong’s views reappear in the *Yantie lun*, in the speeches of the government’s critics.
- 80 Some of those payments were assessed at a very high and probably impractical rate. See Nylan and Loewe 2010, 259.
- 81 Her brothers Wang Feng, Wang Shang (2), and Wang Gen held the title, respectively, from 33 to 22, 15 to 12, and 12 to 7 BCE, and her cousin Wang Yin from 22 to 15 BCE.
- 82 *Hanshu* 98.4032, 4035. Wang Zhengjun, professing to be an old widowed woman of the house of Han, finally flung the imperial seal to the ground, forcing Wang’s emissary to bend to pick it up.
- 83 Bielenstein 1986, 215.

Recasting the Imperial Court in Late Western Han

RANK, DUTY, AND ALLIANCES DURING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Luke Habberstad 何祿凱

HOW DID RELATIONS OF POWER OPERATE IN PREMODERN COURTS? ON what bases did rulers and court officials define legitimate versus illegitimate power? How did these definitions figure in political struggles at court and shape court institutions? Understanding the politics of premodern court societies requires asking—and to the best of our ability answering—this set of questions. Students of imperial and royal courts alike have emphasized that connections to the monarch constituted access to the fundamental source of power. This connection was rarely direct, it being mediated and constrained in complex ways by privileged access to the spaces, institutions, and groups that dominated courtly life and politics. Needless to say, as the sociologist and founding theorist of the court Norbert Elias argued, even the monarch himself could become enveloped or trapped within these same components.¹ Members of the court worked to forge relationships that inched them closer to the monarch, who naturally sought (and was, indeed, expected) to reward his favorites with court rank, positions, and privileges. This model of court power is not meant to account for all complexities. Nonetheless, critics have rightly noted that the monarch-centered model of the court tends to overlook the active construction of institutions and practices by court members for their own benefit. Their critiques see the court as a series of institutions shaped by multiple, often conflicting demands and desires of both the ruler above

and nobles, officials, advisors, and other interest groups below, rather than being solely a tool by which the monarch asserts autocratic power.²

However valuable, these types of interpretations do not take into account at least two key features of late Western Han dynasty politics. First, during Han, the emperor's mother and her male relatives enjoyed an enviable measure of status, not to mention powers of consultation and administration, that threatened and at times eclipsed those of the emperor himself. Political alliances with the consort families were therefore just as important and useful as connections to the emperor,³ with the result that members of the court sought support and patronage from a broad range of figures. A binary division posited between the ruler above and court members below thus does not accurately reflect the dynamics of Han court politics. Second, the Han administrative system featured a finely graded series of offices with bureaucratic ranks, with all officeholders from the lowest county-level officials up to ministers at the imperial court holding specific bureaucratic ranks.⁴ The emperor could not disburse these positions and ranks with total freedom; he himself had to work within the constraints and precedents that governed the administrative system. Alliances, patronage, and hereditary privilege were key to this system, even while ability and performance also figured significantly in making appointments and promoting officials up the bureaucratic hierarchy. Given the significant wealth and status that came with high office, high-ranking officials tended to invoke different notions of duty, status, and alliance when debating the fitness for advancement of individual officials or the proper structure of the bureaucracy as a whole. These debates frequently resulted in appeals to both the emperor and the consort families, in attempts to gain the upper hand over political rivals.

This chapter analyzes policy changes approved in 8 BCE by Chengdi, arguing that this struggle to define duty, rank, and alliance drove courtly life and institutional change in late Western Han, in the context of growing tensions between the emperor and the consort families, particularly the Wang family, and some high officials.⁵ These policy changes arose against a background of shifts in ranks and duties during Western Han that had increased the complexity of the bureaucratic structure, divorcing official ranks to some degree from actual powers. The emperor sought to consolidate and uphold his power with the new policies, which aimed to reorganize ranks to reflect the powers that his highest officers were supposed to command. He hoped thereby to establish the position of his own capital officials as the most senior in the administrative hierarchy and above all to assert his own status as the presiding executive at the apex of the entire bureaucratic structure.

Why did the emperor, in correlating ranks with duties, follow this particular arrangement when trying to consolidate power? By 8 BCE the emperor and key advisers believed the Wang family to be their main obstacle to resetting the balance of power. Together the Wang nobles constituted one of the most formidable families in Chang'an, and control of certain court offices endowed the family with a strong institutional position that allowed it to forge an advantageous network of patronage-based alliances.

Proponents of the policy changes, not coincidentally, were relative outsiders to the capital who had no familial connections to the emperor. Their reforms insisted upon correlating rank strictly with responsibilities, implicitly downgrading the role of court patronage. This position undoubtedly attracted the emperor, who was eager to diminish the Wang family's supremacy.

The motives of the officials who first proposed the reforms may be gleaned from their memorials recorded in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), in which reform proponents sought to stigmatize all alliances formed outside of the clear rank-and-duty hierarchy they intended to establish, particularly alliances with the Wang family. Notions of ranks and duties that figured in contemporary political rhetoric are evident in portions of the *Shuiyuan* or *Shuoyuan* (*Profusion of Persuasions*, 17 BCE) compiled by Liu Xiang (79/78–8 BCE), an influential classicist and former Commissioner of the Imperial Clan (Zongzheng) who was himself no stranger to court struggles. Idealized descriptions in Liu Xiang's text assert that the only court that could foster *legitimate* alliances between rulers and their subordinates was a court where well-defined duties correlated perfectly with rank.

Court Reform, Duty, and Rank in the Reign of Chengdi

The reforms that Chengdi approved in 8 BCE specified a new hierarchy for the highest officials in the empire, mostly by adjusting their ranks:⁶

THE THREE LORDS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Chengdi established an Executive Council (San Gong) composed of three offices at the equal rank of 10,000 bushels each: Chancellor (Chengxiang), Imperial Counsellor (Da Sikong), and Marshal of State (Da Sima).⁷ Prior to this reform, the Chancellor had been the head of administration and the highest-ranking officer in the bureaucracy, followed by his assistant, the Imperial Counsellor (Yushi Dafu).⁸ Also, before 8 BCE, the Marshal of State had an ambiguous position in the regular bureaucracy, since his was only an adjunct title that did not provide the usual ribbons and seals of office, even if the office was typically held by the most powerful generals or officials at court, who often controlled important administrative and consultative functions.

THE INSPECTORATE

Chengdi approved a proposal to replace Regional Inspectors (Cishi) at 600 bushels with Provincial Shepherds (Zhoumu) at fully (*zhen*) 2,000 bushels, the same rank as the Nine Ministers who directed the government ministries.⁹ Wudi (r. 140–87 BCE) had established the Inspectorate in 106 BCE.¹⁰ Inspectors were to monitor and report on the top regional officers, the commandery Gov-

ernors and kingdom Chancellors (Xiang). They were also to identify promising local candidates for office.¹¹

ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMANDERIES AND KINGDOMS

Chengdi reset the salary grade of all Governors at 2,000 bushels¹² and then approved a proposal to set the rank of the kingdom Chancellors at that same grade. Going beyond the reformers' suggestions in their proposal, he eliminated the Metropolitan Commissioners (Neishi) appointed by the court to the kingdoms and replaced them with the Commissioners of the Capital (Zhongwei), who were made equal in salary rank to their counterparts in the commanderies, the Commandants (Duwei), at a rank "equivalent to" (*bi*) 2,000 bushels.¹³

The foregoing reforms of 8 BCE, including Chengdi's decision to establish the three offices of the Executive Council at the new and equal rank of 10,000 bushels, were not Chengdi's first efforts to adjust the rank scale: in 23 BCE, he had eliminated the grades of 800 and 500 bushels.¹⁴ Nor was Chengdi the first emperor to alter the system of bureaucratic ranks, as we see from the early Western Han "Zhi lü" ("Statute on Salary Rank"), excavated from tomb 247 at Zhangjiashan (present-day Hubei Province).¹⁵ That statute's list of positions by salary ranks across the bureaucracy allows comparison of the early Han ranks to the late Western and Eastern Han ranks outlined in several received texts. Table 9.01 lists three salary-rank scales: from the Zhangjiashan statute (presumably in use ca. 186 BCE), from 23 BCE (after which Chengdi abolished the two grades of 800 and 500 bushels), and from 8 BCE (after Chengdi implemented the reforms considered here).¹⁶

Two points bear emphasizing. First, as Table 9.01 makes clear, between 183 and 23 BCE as many as three different salary grades had emerged within any single official rank: equivalent (*bi*) grades (which might appear in any rank) and the fully (*zhen*) and palace (*zhong*) grades (which appear only at the level of the highly ranked, at 2,000 bushels).¹⁷ Since the grades provided the framework for gauging protocols between officials of the same ranks, the gradual proliferation of these grades within ranks created potential confusion within the bureaucracy. As the table illustrates, the grades were still contained within the regular bureaucratic hierarchy. We know, for example, that in theory officials ranked at fully 2,000 bushels ranked higher than those at 2,000 bushels only. Nevertheless, these theoretical gradations by no means prevented conflicts over status and authority among officials in late Western Han, particularly when coupled with questions about jurisdictional duties.

The second point to note is that the reforms in both 23 and 8 BCE created wider gaps in the salary scale, gaps that better reflected the disbursal of privileges and benefits to the officials concerned, as well as their differences in status. One key gap divided

TABLE 9.01 Salary ranks in Western Han

186 BCE	23 BCE	8 BCE
—	—	10,000 <i>shi</i>
2,000 <i>shi</i>	Fully 2,000 <i>shi</i> Palace 2,000 <i>shi</i> 2,000 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 2,000 <i>shi</i>	Fully 2,000 <i>shi</i> Palace 2,000 <i>shi</i> 2,000 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 2,000 <i>shi</i>
1,000 <i>shi</i>	1,000 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 1,000 <i>shi</i>	1,000 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 1,000 <i>shi</i>
800 <i>shi</i>	800 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 800 <i>shi</i>	— —
600 <i>shi</i>	600 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 600 <i>shi</i>	600 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 600 <i>shi</i>
500 <i>shi</i>	500 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 500 <i>shi</i>	— —
400 <i>shi</i>	400 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 400 <i>shi</i>	400 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 400 <i>shi</i>
300 <i>shi</i>	300 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 300 <i>shi</i>	300 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 300 <i>shi</i>
250 <i>shi</i>	—	—
200 <i>shi</i>	200 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 200 <i>shi</i>	200 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 200 <i>shi</i>
160 <i>shi</i>	—	—
120 <i>shi</i>	—	—
	100 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 100 <i>shi</i>	100 <i>shi</i> Equivalent to 100 <i>shi</i>

Note: The salaries (paid in kind and in cash) of Western Han officials were linked to a ranked scale, which also provided a framework for the rank hierarchy of the entire bureaucracy. As the table shows, the scale changed significantly over the course of the dynasty.

lower positions from those at 600 bushels or 1,000 bushels; officials at this higher level included county magistrates as well as officers in the capital, such as Assistants (Cheng) or Senior Officers (Zhang Shi) in the ministries and some of the senior Courtiers (Lang) who supervised and guarded the imperial palaces.¹⁸ A second key jump in rank led to the most senior posts in the empire at 2,000 bushels, which included ministerial positions and governorships. In addition to increased status, these 2,000-bushel positions brought larger imperial gifts of cash and goods, regular bestowals of orders of honor (*jue*), and special legal and tax treatment.¹⁹ Chengdi's reforms in 23 BCE created an entirely new divide between officials ranked at 400 and 600 bushels, thus highlighting the higher status accorded officials ranked at 600 and 1,000 bushels.²⁰ Meanwhile, the decision to establish the 10,000-bushel rank for the three members of the Executive Council asserted unequivocally that these three officers outranked all other 2,000-bushel officials in status and in privilege.

The reforms of 8 BCE constituted a major reorganization of the highest echelons of officialdom. They allowed Chengdi to regularize the rank hierarchy, reduce potential conflicts among his officers, and above all concentrate his power, since the reforms asserted his own status at the apex of the government. Table 9.02 contrasts this new 8 BCE structure with the prior hierarchy.²¹

TABLE 9.02 Rank hierarchy before and after the 8 BCE reforms

Rank Hierarchy of Top Officials before 8 BCE					
COMMANDERY OFFICIALS			• Commandants • Governors & Large Comm. Commandants [†] • Large Comm. Governors [†]		
CAPITAL OFFICIALS				• Nine Ministers	
INSPECTORATE	• Regional Inspectors				
KINGDOM OFFICIALS			• Metropolitan Commissioners* • Chancellors*		
					• Chancellor • Imperial Counselor**
Rank Hierarchy of Top Officials after 8 BCE					
COMMANDERY OFFICIALS			• Commandants • Governors		
CAPITAL OFFICIALS				• Nine Ministers	
INSPECTORATE				• Provincial Shepherds	
KINGDOM OFFICIALS			• Commissioners of the Capitals • Chancellors		
					• Chancellor • Imperial Counsellor • Marshal of State
BUSHEL RANK	600	1,000	Equiv. 2,000	Fully 2,000	10,000

* Rank unknown

** Fully 2,000 bushels, but second in hierarchy after Chancellor

† Large commanderies had 120,000 or more registered households

Implicitly, the 8 BCE reforms asserted several principles. First, all of the highest officials in the capital, Inspectorate, commanderies, and kingdoms were to enjoy the same high rank of 2,000 bushels, not to mention the privileges and status commensurate with this rank (as noted above). Second, both the Nine Ministers based in the capital and the Provincial Shepherds, who reported regularly to the capital, were to enjoy a grade of fully 2,000 bushels, which ranked them slightly higher than the Governors of the commanderies and the kingdom Chancellors, who were all thereafter to have the same grades.²² The reforms effectively declared that the kingdoms were entirely equal in status to the commanderies, an important change in local administration.²³ Chengdi thus reversed a policy trend going back to the reign of Jingdi (r. 156–141 BCE) that had steadily reduced the power and status of the kingdoms vis-à-vis both the central government and the commanderies. Finally, the three members of the Executive Council saw their ranks rise to 10,000 bushels, which better reflected the status of the council as the highest administrative body in the government. Styling himself the chief executive of the Executive Council, the emperor, of course, indisputably became the highest power in the hierarchy.

Through these reforms, then, Chengdi asserted that he alone ultimately presided over a regular hierarchical system, which rose at stepped intervals from regional government to the capital and Inspectorate offices, then to the highest administrators in the realm, and ultimately to the emperor himself. Within a year of Chengdi's death, his

successor was persuaded to rescind the reforms instituting the Executive Council and Inspectorate reforms, but within the space of four years, in 2 BCE, the same emperor reinstituted Chengdi's basic model. That model then remained in place throughout Eastern Han.²⁴

The Reforms and Political Alliances

Why would Chengdi, in order to concentrate his power, have redefined the correlations between ranks and duties and reformulated the bureaucratic hierarchy in this particular manner? Even if Chengdi's position as emperor endowed him with superior status in theory, in reality members of the Wang family related to Chengdi's mother—especially her senior male relatives—oversaw many, if not most, of the day-to-day aspects of the administration. Naturally Chengdi sought to curb their power.²⁵ Proponents argued that the 8 BCE reforms would create a unified bureaucratic hierarchy, protected from complications caused by officials wielding informal powers. The two friends and colleagues who jointly proposed the 8 BCE reforms, Chancellor Zhai Fangjin (d. 7 BCE) and He Wu (d. 3 CE), the newly appointed Imperial Counsellor, each emphasized the importance of clearly defined official duties and powers within a bureaucratic hierarchy that allowed for no informal influence.²⁶ By carefully delineating the “discrete responsibilities” (*fen zhi*) of the highest officers of the land, their reforms were meant to obviate situations where “authority would be severed from official position.”²⁷ Such statements implied that nobody, not even members of the Wang consort family, should be able to encroach upon the emperor's rightful position as head of the bureaucracy.

The Wang family's potential and actual interference in official recommendations and appointments would have made such principles attractive to the emperor. The senior members of the Wang family were extremely powerful in Chang'an, given their close kinship ties with the empress dowager. From their high ranks and positions, they could recommend a great many candidates for higher office, which in turn strengthened their network of alliances.²⁸ This was particularly true for Chengdi's maternal male relatives, four of whom were designated Marshal of State (Da Sima) while Chengdi was on the throne; together these four relatives asserted their authority for most of the emperor's reign. For example, Wang Feng (d. 22 BCE), Chengdi's oldest uncle and the first Wang Marshal of State, duly sought out worthy officials to assist him.²⁹ The Wang family was hardly the first noble family in Western Han to consolidate its power by filling positions with its own members and allies.³⁰ Kamiya Masakazu, however, has recently argued that the Wang men were distinctive in that they commonly recommended and promoted officials for regional administrative posts, including such posts as Regional Inspector, Governor, and kingdom Chancellor. In the course of their careers, some proportion of these officials eventually achieved posts at 2,000 bushels in Chang'an.³¹ Such appointments provided the Wang family with a network of relationships extending across the entire Han realm, consolidating the Wang stranglehold on power.

Such was the Wang family's dominance that even some people family members recommended and appointed expressed reservations about their power. In the most extreme case, an official recommended by Wang Feng urged Chengdi to sack his patron.³² We also read of divisions within the Wang family itself over recommendations.³³ Such fissures are perhaps to be expected,³⁴ but they also reflect a Wang family so confident in its hold on power that it did not need to maintain a united front against potential rivals; after all, its members could close ranks and act as one whenever threatened.³⁵ As the institutional positions held by the senior members of the Wang family gave them a strong voice in decisions at court, the family's supremacy must have seemed to most in high office a *fait accompli* to be dealt with delicately and strategically.³⁶

The challenge for the emperor and others who wanted to wrest power from the Wang family was to construct alternative alliances and power relationships. Zhai Fangjin and He Wu fit the bill for Chengdi, as the sources reveal. The *Hanshu* casts both as outsiders to Chang'an, with Zhai hailing from Runan Commandery (present-day Anhui) and He from Shu (present-day Sichuan);³⁷ both had gained recommendations and gradually advanced to the highest levels of the bureaucracy. Zhai and He were famous for their erudition in classical texts, their fair and honest administrations, and their consistent adherence to rules and regulations.³⁸ He Wu even won renown for his refusal to protect a member of his own family from legal prosecution,³⁹ while Zhai Fangjin earned a reputation for acting against the powerful families in the Chang'an area who had engaged in profiteering.⁴⁰ In sum, the *Hanshu* paints Zhai and He as Chang'an outsiders and sticklers for the law—officials whose competence, honesty, and classical erudition won the admiration of many at court. The recommendations that spurred their advancement, and the privileges and power they accumulated, we are led to believe, were entirely proper.

Even so, as Zhai and He rose through the bureaucratic ranks, they were not immune to charges of favoritism or cliquish behavior. Indeed, such charges were commonly traded between different factions, even while all condemned factional politics. He Wu, we read, took pleasure in raising up worthy candidates after wide consultation with bureaucrats and classicists, despite his claim to despise cliques.⁴¹ Zhai Fangjin shared He's interest in identifying worthy candidates. Nonetheless, in a bitter memorial submitted after Zhai's death, Du Ye (d. 2 CE) accused Zhai of various improprieties, including promoting the careers of several unworthy officials who had "only to attach themselves to Zhai Fangjin to receive exalted offices."⁴² Not coincidentally, Du Ye was a native of Duling, one of the imperial mausoleum towns, scion of a powerful noble family that had maintained a prominent position in the capital for more than a century, and nephew of Du Qin (fl. 33–22 BCE), Wang Feng's closest adviser. Naturally Du Ye hated Zhai, since Zhai had zealously prosecuted Chang'an's noble families. The accusations that He and Zhai endured while negotiating the politics of alliances were typical. Indeed, the Wang family itself was particularly vulnerable to charges of favoritism and

cliquish behavior, though swift punishment was usually meted out to their accusers on the rare occasions that the charges surfaced.⁴³

Chengdi thus faced a number of obstacles when instituting the 8 BCE reforms. He had to craft a new bureaucratic structure that effectively sidelined the Wang family. But to do so he had to ally himself with officials whose political connections were both sufficiently robust to counter the Wangs' network and yet untainted by accusations of favoritism and cliquishness (to the degree this was possible). Tracing the proposal and enactment of the reforms allows us to see these considerations in action. Some time between 10 and 8 BCE, He Wu circulated the initial proposal (*jian*) for establishing the Executive Council.⁴⁴ The emperor implemented it after gaining the approval of his close confidante and former tutor, Zhang Yu (d. 5 BCE), who had at best a tenuous relationship with the Wang family.⁴⁵ After approving the Executive Council reform, Chengdi retained Zhai Fangjin as Chancellor, while naming He Wu to the new position of Executive Council Imperial Counsellor (Da Sikong). Chengdi allowed Wang Gen to keep his title of Marshal of State and thus join the triumvirate of the Executive Council, even as he took away his post as General of Cavalry on the Alert. For the first time, Wang Gen received the regular ribbons and seals of office, items that in theory marked Gen's new status as a government functionary subordinate to the emperor.⁴⁶ By placing Wang Gen nominally at the same rank as Zhai Fangjin and He Wu in the Executive Council, the reforms promoted a new institutional arrangement that subtly, if unmistakably, underscored Gen's inferior status vis-à-vis the emperor and thereby weakened, by extension, the power of the Wang family led by Gen.

The other reforms only further marginalized the Wang men. By late Western Han the regional offices had become standard rungs on the ladder of bureaucratic promotion. Almost all of Chengdi's highest officials had first served as Regional Inspectors, Governors, or kingdom Chancellors. The Wang family certainly did not exercise a total monopoly over appointments to such posts, but, as noted above, they had proven adept at moving officials through regional offices before bringing them to the capital to serve in 2,000-bushels posts. The 8 BCE reforms disrupted that path. As Zhu Bo, a military officer who became Chancellor after Chengdi's reign, later noted when urging a reversal of the 8 BCE reforms, Zhai Fangjin had seen to it that the new Provincial Shepherds were ranked immediately below the Nine Ministers, and this placement virtually ensured that the most capable Shepherds would be considered for promotion to fill empty ministerial positions.⁴⁷ The Executive Council and Chengdi were then to oversee the assessment of these Provincial Shepherds and thus more closely monitor who was placed in ministerial positions; in essence the Governors and kingdom Chancellors, now ranked lower than the Shepherds, had been cut out of the promotional loop.⁴⁸ The result: Wang Gen could no longer use the tried-and-true methods for determining career appointments that his brothers had used to their advantage.⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, no record describes the emperor consulting Wang Gen before he implemented the reforms. Significantly, later in the same year, Wang Gen claimed illness and asked

to retire. Chengdi allowed him to withdraw from active government service, though the emperor increased his sinecure and gave him lavish gifts.⁵⁰ By such cautious acts, Chengdi presumably hoped to forestall an uproar, because the critics (some of whom were allies of the Wang family) alleged that the reforms represented little more than archaizing name changes that would have little or no practical effect.⁵¹

Why would Zhai Fangjin and He Wu, for their part, propose these reforms? What frustrations had these officials encountered in navigating their careers in late Western Han, and how did the reforms address them? As noted above, during and after the reign of Wudi the emergence of up to four different grades for a given rank (“fully,” “equivalent,” “palace,” and “regular”) had tended to create confusion—potentially explosive confusion—in matters of protocol and jurisdiction by muddying the direct chain of command binding superior to subordinate.⁵² One example of just such a dispute affected Zhai Fangjin’s own career. It illustrates how officials tended to invoke claims of duty and rank when criticizing unofficial alliances forged outside the bureaucratic hierarchy, as epitomized by the “illegitimate” Wang family patron-client relations. Duty and rank thus became the code words by which “legitimate” versus “illegitimate” alliances were defined and policed.

Let us begin with a few background details. In the years leading up to 18 BCE, Zhai Fangjin served as Deputy to the Chancellor, ranking just below the Chancellor in his bureau.⁵³ One day, on a trip outside the Chang’an city walls, while accompanying the emperor to Sweet Springs, Zhai’s chariot briefly traveled on the highway reserved for imperial use. The Colonel of Internal Security charged Zhai with a crime and duly confiscated his chariot. At a meeting held upon their arrival in Sweet Springs, the colonel and Zhai both submitted memorials with counteraccusations, with Zhai Fangjin claiming that the colonel had divulged confidential matters while holding an earlier office. In the end, Zhai prevailed and the colonel forfeited his post.⁵⁴

The conflict was not merely a clash of personalities, given the somewhat overlapping jurisdictions of the offices held by Zhai Fangjin and the Colonel of Internal Security. The Deputy to the Chancellor investigated the illegal activities of officials,⁵⁵ while the Colonel of Internal Security monitored the officials of the capital region, in effect serving as Inspector for the capital.⁵⁶ To make matters worse, the colonel held a post ranked at 2,000 bushels, while the deputy’s rank was set at equivalent (*bi*) to 2,000 bushels. According to Han precedent (*gushi*), the Colonel of Internal Security ranked below the Deputy to the Chancellor.⁵⁷ But precedent hardly prevented conflict caused by overlapping authorities and jurisdictions.

In another earlier incident, the Chancellor, Zhai’s immediate superior, had ordered members of his staff (*yuan shi*) to help apprehend a murderous gang. The Colonel of Internal Security at that time, one Juan Xun, protested that the Chancellor was infringing on his responsibility: “According to the *Annals*, those appointed by the king rank above the vassal lords in order to lend authority to the king’s orders. I have been fortunate enough to receive imperial favor in serving as an imperial envoy [i.e., Inspector],

with a duty to oversee and observe the ministers (*gong qing*).⁵⁸ Juan Xun thus asserted classical justification for his duty to inspect; by casting his duties as a direct charge from the emperor himself, he further claimed the right to monitor all high ministers and officials at court. In doing so, Juan obliquely asserted a main difference between his office and that of the Chancellor: the latter was ennobled only by virtue of its unassailably high position, and he did not enjoy a direct charge from the emperor himself that was rooted in classical principles. In this incident, officials agreed that the Chancellor had overstepped his bounds, after which the gang's leader was apprehended and punished.

Zhai Fangjin did not let the matter drop. Perhaps he was offended, or perhaps he thought Juan Xun himself had gone against precedent by failing to visit the bureaus of the Chancellor and Imperial Counsellor, an omission whose rudeness seemed compounded by Juan's arrogance in the company of these officials. When Zhai launched a secret investigation against Juan Xun, he discovered two things: that the colonel had met privately with the Commissioner of the Palace and that he had once descended from his chariot to pay his respects to Wang Shang, yet another of the emperor's Wang-family uncles.⁵⁹ Zhai's accusation against Juan Xun is worth quoting in full for what it reveals about interagency conflicts:

I have heard that when a ruling house is founded, it is to treat the honorable suitably and to revere the elderly, conferring rank and position according to courtesies reserved for high and low. In doing so, the kingly way is regulated. According to the *Annals*, we honor the highest lord by calling him "Minister." Within all of the land bound by the seas, nothing falls outside his purview. When the Chancellor has an audience with our Sagely Ruler, out of respect for the Chancellor the ruler rises from the throne or descends from his chariot.⁶⁰ The ministers thus all receive and conform to his sagely instruction. In this way, they show it to the rest of the empire.

Xun is an official ranked at 2,000 bushels, who was fortunate to be chosen to serve as an Inspector. He does not respect ritual protocol, he belittles the Chancellor, and he denigrates superior ministers. He moreover disdains decorum and fails to maintain probity. He is treacherous, sycophantic, and inconstant, "a coward who assumes fierce looks."⁶¹ He damages the imperial structure, throwing the court ranks into disorder. He is not fit to occupy this position. I respectfully submit that the emperor should order the Chancellor to remove Juan Xun from office.⁶²

By failing to show proper respect to the Chancellor, Zhai Fangjin argued, the colonel had disrupted court protocols. Even worse, in dismounting from his chariot to show respect for Wang Shang, Juan Xun had displayed a calculated deference to a member of the Wang family, hence Zhai's allegation of Juan's sycophancy. The implication was clear: Colonel Juan Xun put far more stock in the power of the consort family than he

did in the emperor or in the imperial bureaucracy under the emperor's supervision. Insinuating himself into the powerful Wang patronage network for his own personal benefit, the colonel had committed a dereliction of his official duty.

Review of this memorial enables us better to understand the probable motivations that spurred Zhai Fangjin and He Wu to offer their reform proposals to Chengdi. In theory, the Western Han bureaucracy administered the realm according to a strict hierarchy of duties and ranks at whose apex sat the emperor. In practice, however, differing interpretations of these duties and ranks, not to mention overlapping jurisdictions, easily gave rise to conflicts at the court, in which the parties to these conflicts called for support from their allies. To return to this example: had Colonel Juan Xun actually managed to obtain the intervention of Wang Shang, he could perhaps have looked to him for help against Zhai Fangjin. Zhai, however, deployed normative standards for rank and duty to cast Juan Xun's attempt to curry favor with Wang Shang as illegitimate. The 8 BCE reforms attempted something similar: in clearly defining the ranks and duties of high officers, and firmly establishing the emperor's position at the top of the hierarchy, the reforms sought to have every official look solely to the emperor for support, while condemning all other alliances as "illegitimate."

Ideal Courts in the *Shuiyuan*: Models for the 8 BCE Reforms?

Zhai Fangjin and He Wu were not the first men at Chengdi's court to try to check the power of the Wang family, nor were they the first to advocate new models for official institutions. If anything, the renowned polymath Liu Xiang, as senior statesman at the court and a member of the imperial family, offered more strident and consistent criticism of Wang-family ambitions, which Liu considered a threat to the health of the body politic.⁶³ Liu was a staunch defender of Liu family interests, his voice commanding ever-greater authority as his stature was elevated to that of elder statesman at Chengdi's court. In 26 BCE, Chengdi had put Liu Xiang, one of his most erudite men, in charge of collecting texts from around the empire. Liu then collated, corrected, and catalogued them for inclusion in a central imperial library or set of libraries, he being deeply versed in a wide range of classical and technical knowledge.⁶⁴ As a result, Liu's works not only reflect the most important sources and rhetorical styles of his era; they also illustrate the range of concepts drawn upon by politically engaged and highly cultivated officials when formulating their policy proposals. Liu Xiang was, moreover, on good terms with most of the important officials at Chengdi's court, including Zhang Yu, Chengdi's tutor, who recommended adoption of the Executive Council reform.

Liu Xiang left behind several important compilations designed to provide models for both the emperor and reformers.⁶⁵ One of Liu's most famous works, the *Shuiyuan*, a collection of authoritative anecdotes about political rule, is a logical place to begin an exploration of those models. Indeed, the *Shuiyuan* can be profitably read as the collected musings of one late Western Han political figure who was as keenly aware of

contemporary issues as he was well versed in antique rhetoric. For although the *Shuiyuan* overlaps significantly with earlier compilations in wide circulation before and during Chengdi's reign, especially the *Han Shi waizhuan* (*Han's Outer Transmission of the Odes*, comp. ca. 150 BCE), Liu Xiang tended to reshape each anecdote to highlight contemporary concerns. My goal here is not to "prove" that Zhai Fangjin and He Wu directly transposed Liu Xiang's ideals of bureaucratic order into institutional practice, but rather to consider the models that the reformers probably had in mind when they proposed the actual reforms of 8 BCE.⁶⁶ Given the wide applicability of many *Shuiyuan* passages to the issues under consideration in this chapter, I focus only on passages that mention the offices and titles that figured in Chengdi's reforms of 8 BCE.

Close reading of such passages reveals Liu Xiang's explicit approval of creating offices with clearly delineated duties and jurisdictions. Two such passages in the "Jun Dao" ("Way of the Ruler") chapter purport to describe ruler-official relations in the ancient courts of the legendary sage-rulers Yao, Shun, and Yu. The first has Yao installing his chief ministers in their offices:

During the time of Yao, Shun was Director over the Masses (Situ), Qi was Major (Sima), Yu was Imperial Counsellor (Sikong), Houji was Director of Agricultural Fields (Tianchou), Kui was Music Master (Yuezheng), Chui was Artisan Master (Gongshi), Boyi was Director of Ceremonial (Zhizong), Gao Yao was Minister of Justice (Dali), and Yi was Master Huntsman (Quqin).⁶⁷ Yao, though able and clever, could not do all of these things by himself.

By what principle did Yao act as ruler and these nine men serve as his ministers? Yao understood the affairs of the nine offices and commissioned the nine to each take on the affairs of his office. All of them succeeded in their charges, and thus they completed nine acts of merit. Yao as a result [of their merits] accomplished his own achievements and was able to rule the known world. For this reason, they say that "knowing people" is the Way of the ruler, and "knowing one's duties" is the Way of the minister. Once both these principles are set, no one will meddle with this tried and true model, and all under heaven will be well governed, certainly.⁶⁸

According to this passage, Yao fulfilled "the Way of the ruler" (*zhu dao*) because he matched the right people with positions whose duties were clearly defined. He Wu and Zhai Fangjin no doubt would have approved this model of bureaucratic offices with clearly "discrete responsibilities" (*fen zhi*).

But how did Yao know his men? The answer comes in the next *Shuiyuan* entry, which underscores the need for respectful exchanges between rulers and ministers. It begins with King Tang of Yin asking his adviser Yi Yin how he is to know his high officials, including members of his Executive Council. Yi Yin says that Yao, Shun, and Yu each assessed people differently:

In raising up worthy men to office the three rulers all differed in their ways but achieved success. But they nonetheless experienced some failures. How much worse [their records] would have been had they not used models and measures, but instead followed only their instincts when appointing people. Then they certainly would have failed spectacularly! If rulers make officials present their own abilities as tribute (*gong*), then they will not fail even once in ten thousand times!⁶⁹

Yi Yin argues that even the most capable rulers are fallible. Hence the necessity for real and continual exchanges of views and information via an implicit contract forged between the ruler and minister: the former provides the latter with a position in recognition of his merit and hard work, and the latter manifests his talents through exemplary service. The passage describes these officials' abilities and character as their "tribute" (*gong*), a word used to describe the gifts that local lords regularly presented their overlord during rituals, acknowledging the superiority of ruler to local lord. When a wise ruler installs able ministers, the passage continues, he confers upon them honorable rank (*jue*) and salary (*lu*) such that "worthies are promoted and thus display their own distinctions." The passage concludes with an exultant description of the perfectly ordered state, in which the ruler governs free of worry, ministers "take pleasure in fulfilling their responsibilities," and thereby "the ruler's grace flows throughout the populace."

According to the *Shuiyuan*, the governments of Yao, Shun, and Yu were exemplary because they had created perfect bureaucratic structures: they recognized and rewarded able officials with clearly defined government posts, which allowed those same officials to clearly demonstrate to the ruler what they had achieved. In other words, the ideal government did not live by the precise execution of bureaucratic duties alone. Bonds forged through continual communication and displays of trust were needed to ensure smooth governance. In other passages depicting the legendary courts of rulers from high antiquity, the *Shuiyuan* likens the ideal relation between ruler and minister to that between close friends.⁷⁰ Whether or not the 8 BCE reformers believed this degree of intimacy possible, we see that at least one of their goals was to provide the means to "evaluate [job] effectiveness" (*kao gong xiao*).⁷¹ Modern notions regarding evaluation are irrelevant here. Zhai Fangjin and He Wu certainly were not advocating the use of written tests as instruments of assessment. Rather, as in the courts depicted in the *Shuiyuan*, these late Western Han officials considered that the quality of exchanges forged between ruler and ministers would likely determine the quality of dynastic rule. Determined to adjust imperial institutions to foster better communications, even personal alliances, between "those above" and "those below," they hoped to match highly placed bureaucrats, each equipped with varying abilities, to suitable offices. Implicit in this ideal, of course, was a move away from family connections or questionable alliances when searching for candidates. To Liu Xiang's way of thinking, the classical courts of

pre-imperial times could inspire contemporary reformers to rethink the empire's purposes and operations, thereby improving the chances for legitimate exchanges and alliances between the emperor and his best subjects.

Conclusion

In order to suppress the Wang family and minimize its opportunities to build alliances, Chengdi and a circle of reform-minded officials proposed the 8 BCE reforms, which cast Chengdi as the leader of a new bureaucratic hierarchy where Wang family power would be offset by that of the two other officials named to the Executive Council. The 8 BCE reforms, in legitimizing some alliances at the expense of others liable to increase the power of the Wang family, reflected a fact of life at the Western Han court: the conflict between the throne and the leading consort family members drove court politics and institutional change. Still, factional politics alone do not explain the reforms. The reforms were not solely motivated by family or individual interests, nor even by the public interest. Rather, supporters and critics of the Wang family alike felt the need to invoke the established norms and precedents when formulating their arguments concerning ranks, obligations, jurisdictions, and the bureaucratic procedures for recommendation and selection, fully aware that their opponents would likewise invoke other norms and precedents in the policy debates at court.

The reforms of 8 BCE are significant not merely because they illustrate the complexities of rank, duty, and alliance in the Western Han court, and thus undermine the prevailing modern assumption that ascribes to antiquity a ruler-centered model of autocratic courtly politics.⁷² Key actors discussed here—Liu Xiang and Chengdi himself, Zhai Fangjin and He Wu, Zhang Yu and a gaggle of Wang family members—had differing objectives and experiences, their permanent or temporary alliances notwithstanding. Let us remember that Chengdi went beyond the proposal of Zhai and He when he eliminated the Metropolitan Commissioners and introduced the Commissioners of the Capital; that Zhai Fangjin invoked ranks and duties to prevail in a conflict he had with another official; that Chengdi and Zhang Yu, each in his own way, sought a precarious balance at court, whereby Wang-family power would be at once acknowledged and severely limited by the institution of the tripartite Executive Council; and that this new arrangement would have proven personally enriching for both Zhai and He, since it awarded them a major salary raise and a big boost in status at court. At the same time, the 8 BCE reforms allowed the emperor and his court, many of whom were steeped in classical learning, to instantiate the supposed ideals of bygone eras, as espoused by influential scholar-officials like Liu Xiang. All of these factors (and doubtless many more for which we have no records) contributed to a major institutional shift.

If an autocratic imperial court cannot explain this range of actors and interests, the notion of a hierarchical “Han bureaucracy” does not fully satisfy either. As we have seen, a convergence of interests in 8 BCE created the necessary momentum for

significant change. But even when actors pursued divergent goals, they did so within a commonly understood framework for action. This fact reminds us that late Western Han saw the gradual emergence of an imperial court marked by complex norms, status hierarchies, political alliances, familial networks, and spatial characteristics that set it apart from the rest of the empire. Characterizing the court simply as the “apex of a Han bureaucracy” does not do justice to the nature of political power and elite social and political life in the early empires in China. Such a characterization also elides the fact that high officials in late Western Han had increasingly grown accustomed to the idea that they were members of a noble group with its own prestige and prerogatives. We thus might profitably imagine Chang’an, at least in late Western Han, more as a vast court society than solely as the capital of a bureaucratic empire. What were the boundaries, rhythms, and concerns of this society? Careful consideration of this question will provide fresh perspectives on the study of Han officialdom. After all, if a hierarchical bureaucracy administered the empire, we must also ask *why* people sought promotion and advancement. If the grand prize was access to the imperial court, what broad range of benefits in terms of power, status, and material comforts did the court provide?

Reading the reform initiatives as a convergence of interests raises a further question and an observation. First, the question: studies of courts and court societies have tended to emphasize new institutions created at the outset of a ruling dynasty or a new reign, focusing on how they solidified or legitimized a ruler’s power, or allowed certain groups to gain influence in the new regime.⁷³ The 8 BCE reforms, by contrast, came one year before the end of Chengdi’s reign and less than two decades before the end of Western Han. Still, they rearranged long-standing court offices, some of which were nearly two hundred years old. Changing virtually congealed institutions was no easy matter.⁷⁴ How, then, do the interests that converged in 8 BCE differ from those that led to institutional changes in early Western Han? Even partial answers to this generally overlooked question could help us better define the shifting contours of the Western Han courts (plural) under different rulers and ministers, including the factors that promoted change, and such answers would prove instructive for other historical contexts. Next, the observation: the convergence of interests in 8 BCE reminds us that institutional change is always complicated and messy; events rarely unfold neatly according to a master plan. In the story told here, multiple motivations and contingent events drove the actions of the ruler, his relatives, nobles, and officials. In this respect, institutional change in ancient courts does not seem to differ all that much from the more thoroughly studied courts of the early modern period, or even from contemporary political settings.⁷⁵

Appendix: The 8 BCE Reform Proposals

A PROPOSAL (*JIAN*) OFFERED BY HE WU, CA. 10–8 BCE,
TO CREATE THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (*HANSHU* 83.3404–05)

In ancient times the people were plain and governing duties were simple. The advisers in the kingdoms were necessarily worthies and sages. They still, however, followed the model of the three luminaries of Heaven (sun, moon, and stars), and filled the three offices of the Executive Council, each having discrete responsibilities (*fen zhi*).

In this declining age, customs and patterns have degenerated and the duties of governing have proliferated. The talent of administrators is inferior to the talent of the ancients, but the Chancellor on his own initiative has arrogated duties rightly belonging to an Executive Council. This is why over the long term they have been abandoned and improperly administered. It is right to establish the offices of the Executive Council, define the charges of the ministers and counsellors, and divide up their responsibilities and dispense their governing duties. In this way we can evaluate effectiveness.

A MEMORIAL (*ZOU*) SUBMITTED BY HE WU AND ZHAI FANGJIN, 8 BCE,
TO ESTABLISH PROVINCIAL SHEPHERDS (*HANSHU* 83.3406)

The ancient rulers selected worthies from among the nobles and made them Provincial Lords. The *Documents* says: “He consulted with the twelve Shepherds,” and thereby broadened his perceptiveness, lighting a candle on the darkness and hidden recesses. Now the Regional Inspectors occupy the position of the Shepherds and Lords, and they control the governance of one whole province. They select and rank the senior officials. Those they recommend for a position can reach as high as the Nine Ministers. Those they deem to be poorly qualified are immediately withdrawn. Their charge is heavy and their responsibilities great.

The meaning (*yi*) of the *Annals* is to employ the noble to govern the lower ranked and to not have those at the bottom overseeing those at the top. The Inspector’s grade is that of a low-ranking Counsellor (*Dafu*), but he oversees those at 2,000 bushels. The weight of rank is out of balance; there has been a loss of the order properly due to official position. Your servants request that you eliminate the Inspectors and replace them with the Provincial Shepherds so as to accord with the ancient system.

A MEMORIAL SUBMITTED BY HE WU AND ZHAI FANGJIN, 8 BCE, TO EQUALIZE
KINGDOM AND COMMANDERY OFFICIALS (*HANSHU* 86.8485–86)

In the past the vassal kings decided trials and were in charge of governing. Their commissioners were in charge of judicial duties, their ministers coordinated administration and advised the kings, and their Commissioners of the Capital had full command

over [the control of] violence and wrongdoing. Now the kings do not make judicial decisions or parcel out governing duties. The Commissioner of the Capital's office is abandoned, its responsibilities folded under the Metropolitan Commissioner's office [in the kingdoms].

Appointment of commandery Governors and kingdom Chancellors is the means to unify and systematize, making the people trustful and secure.⁷⁶ Now the Metropolitan Commissioner's position is low but his power is great, so authority and rank of position are at odds with each other. Since high-ranked officers are not strung together into one system, governing is difficult. Your humble servants request that the kingdom Chancellors be made equal to the Governors, and the Metropolitan Commissioners be made equal to the Commandants. In this way we will accord with the order of high and low and level out the powers due to salary-grade weights.

Notes

- 1 Norbert Elias first identified the court as a sociological structure worthy of independent analysis, elaborating two main theories. In *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* (*The Civilizing Process*), first published in 1939, Elias argued that the centralization of power in courts in medieval and early modern Europe transformed behavior, as rulers elaborated "civilized" manners and modes of interaction in order to establish their superior status over the nobility; these manners then spread to the nobility and, over time, to wider sectors of society. See Elias 2000. In *Die Höfische Gesellschaft* (*The Court Society*), first written in 1933 but not published until 1969, Elias argued in greater detail that court protocol and spatial arrangements allowed the autocratic ruler to assert power over the nobility, even if both were constrained by the court's elaborate rules of etiquette. See Elias 2006. Elias's basic model holds that the ruler sits at the center of the court, which he uses to consolidate political power, even as he becomes captive to court institutions. Most subsequent studies have retained this focus on the ruler.
- 2 The chapters on ancient courts in Spawforth 2007 explore in detail the strengths and weaknesses of Elias's theories. See also Duindam 2004.
- 3 The secondary literature on early China seldom addresses this point, casting even young and weak Han emperors as the primary locus of political authority. See, for example, Lewis 2007, 64.
- 4 Note that Han counties often had more than 10,000 inhabitants. Bureaucratic ranks did not extend to officials governing local villages. See Loewe 2010b, 310–11.
- 5 Surveys of the politics of this period have paid insufficient attention to these problems, but instead condemn Chengdi as an ineffectual ruler and highlight the domination of the Wang family. See, for example, Lü Simian [1947/1962] 2010, 186–94; Lin Jianming 2003, 584–90.
- 6 For translations of the reform proposals, see this chapter's appendix. Though all of the 8 BCE reforms were proposed and approved as a unit (see below), scholars have typically treated them separately. The literature is extensive. Most work addresses the Executive Council reform, whose institution some earlier scholars characterize as a further step toward marginalizing bureaucrats and establishing authoritarian rule. See for example, Hsü 2001 (repr.), vol. 1, 151–55, refuted by Zhu Zongbin 1990, 55–61. Others have cast the Executive Council reforms as part of a larger struggle between the "inner court" (*neichao*) and "outer court" (*waichao*), with Chengdi firmly supporting the latter in 8 BCE. The idea runs through much of the literature, but for an early example, see Yoshinami 1968. This chapter posits other possible reasons for

- the reforms. For the Inspectorate reforms, see de Crespigny 2007. The kingdom administration reforms have received less attention, but see Kamada 1962, 162–63; Kamiya 1974.
- 7 Translations of most titles follow Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary*, 756–68. Note that Loewe uses “Imperial Counsellor” for both Yushi Dafu and Da Sikong, and he has recently suggested replacing titles he translated as “Superintendent” with “Commissioner” (personal communication, August 7, 2011). Use of “Executive Council” for San Gong follows Giele 2006.
 - 8 The *Hanshu*'s “Table of Officers and Ministers” does not give the ranks for the Chancellor or the Imperial Counsellor (*Hanshu* 19a.724–25), prompting Bielenstein 1980, 7, to state that the ranks of these officials were unknown. Fortunately, the “Zhi lü” (“Statute on Salary Grades”), one of the legal documents excavated at Zhangjiashan, showed that the Imperial Counsellor held the rank of 2,000 bushels; the statute, however, did not specify a salary grade for the Chancellor. See *Er nian lü ling*, “Zhi lü,” strip 440, in Peng, Chen, and Kudō 2007, 258. However, the *Shiji* and *Hanshu* clearly state that the Chancellor headed the government and ranked higher than the Imperial Counsellor, who was his second-in-command. Moreover, from the early Western Han period Chancellors commonly served first as Imperial Counsellors. See the list of Chancellors in An and Xiong 2006, 26–29.
 - 9 Note, however, the statement by Zhu Bo (6 BCE) to the effect that Provincial Shepherds were still considered one slight step below the ministers, despite their identical rank (*Hanshu* 84.3406). See also nn. 47, 51 below.
 - 10 *Hanshu* 6.197.
 - 11 For a description and analysis of the duties of the Inspectors, see de Crespigny 2007.
 - 12 Evidence for this change is fragmentary but convincing. *Hanshu* 9.294 states that in 37 BCE Yuandi (r. 48–33 BCE) increased the grades of Governors of “large commanderies” (*da jun*), defined as having more than 120,000 registered households. According to the *Han jiuyi*, in 8 BCE the grades of these Governors were reduced to 2,000 bushels, effectively reversing the policy of 37 BCE by lowering the rank of large commandery Governors to that of all other Governors. See *Han jiuyi*, *juan* 2, in *Hanguan liu zhong* 1990, 82, collated by Sun Xingyan (1753–1818 CE). Bielenstein 1980, 187n12, says that Yuandi had increased the rank to fully 2,000 bushels, “fully” being higher than just 2,000 bushels.
 - 13 For the rank of Commandant, see *Hanshu* 19a.742. In 37 BCE, Commandants of large commanderies, like their immediate superiors, the Governors (see n. 12 above), received an increase in salary grade to 2,000 bushels (*Hanshu* 9.294). Unfortunately, we have no record that the rank of Commandant in the large commanderies was reduced in 8 BCE. Nevertheless, Bielenstein 1980, 183n26, speculates that the order of 37 BCE “may have been rescinded in 8 BCE.” Bielenstein is likely correct, since the thrust of Chengdi's policy was to equalize the ranks of all local administrators, making them consistent with a system in which capital officers were highest in rank (see below).
 - 14 *Hanshu* 10.312.
 - 15 This tomb was sealed in 186 BCE. See *Er nian lü ling*, strips 441–72, in Peng, Chen, and Kudō 2007, 257–95.
 - 16 For the ranks of 186 BCE and 23 BCE, see Yan Buke 2009, 89–90. For those of 8 BCE, see Bielenstein 1980, 4; and Fukui 1988, 280.
 - 17 Yan Buke 2009, 370–468, argues persuasively that the “equivalent” ranks absorbed the emperor's household officials and attendants into the official bureaucratic hierarchy. (The Zhangjiashan texts and some early edicts term these officials “servants of the emperor” [*huan huangdi zhe*] or some variation thereof.) As Yan noted, most of the subordinates of the Commissioner of the Palace (Guangluxun), who was responsible for the emperor's security and various household and advisory duties, held equivalent ranks. The “equivalent” ranks were in use by mid-Western Han, during the reign of Wudi.

- 18 The 600- and 1,000-bushels positions were conceived as one unit for purposes of privileges and benefits. According to *Hanshu* 19a.743, the 2,000-bushel officials received silver seals and green ribbons, whereas positions of 600 bushels “and above” received bronze seals and black ribbons. Fukui 1988, 281–83, marshals the evidence from imperial edicts to demonstrate that many officials ranked at 600 and 1,000 bushels received the same sort and type of gifts and privileges, which usually did not compare with the largesse enjoyed by those ranked at 2,000 bushels or above.
- 19 Fukui 1988, 279–302; Loewe 2010b, 310–11. Note that officials at 2,000 bushels had the particular privilege of recommending candidates for office. Those who had served at that rank for three years or more could sponsor (*ren*) a son or brother as a Courtier (Lang), allowing them to serve as the emperor’s escort or guard in the imperial palaces at Chang’an. See Loewe 2004, 131–34.
- 20 Chengdi’s motivation for eliminating the rank of 800 bushels in 23 BCE is less obvious. Undoubtedly the most important 800-bushel position at court was Advisory Counsellor (Jian Dafu), whose duties are ill understood. The evidence indicates that after 23 BCE the Advisory Counsellor was ranked at “equivalent” to 600 bushels. See Bielenstein 1980, 26.
- 21 As Table 9.02 indicates, we do not know the salary ranks of the Chancellor and the kingdom officials prior to 8 BCE. For the Chancellor, see n. 8 above. For the kingdom administrators, we know only that in 46 BCE Yuandi lowered the ranks of the kingdom Ministers to below that of the Governors (*Hanshu* 9.283). Kamiya 1974, 25, asserts that the kingdom Ministers and commissioners were demoted from fully 2,000 bushels to 2,000 bushels.
- 22 As de Crespigny 2007, 57–61, notes, during the time of Yuandi subordinate officers had been established in the Inspectorate provinces. By raising the Inspectors to the rank of fully 2,000 bushels, Chengdi helped complete a process by which the Inspectors became more integrated as regular officers in the highest levels of the bureaucracy, assuming an institutional identity that was quite different from their initial role as imperial envoys.
- 23 Vankeerberghen’s chapter in this volume also discusses the impact of this reform.
- 24 In 6 BCE, the newly enthroned Aidi (r. 7–1 BCE), on the advice of his Chancellor Zhu Bo, rescinded the reforms of the Executive Council and the Inspectorate, reinstituting the previous structure with the Chancellor as the chief administrator and the Regional Inspectors at 600 bushels. The reforms of regional administration were retained, however, and in 2 BCE Aidi reversed his position and reinstated Chengdi’s reforms.
- 25 The relationship between Chengdi and the Wang family was complex, and a full discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter. Chengdi was in a difficult position. He was expected to accord his mother proper respect, and indeed he must have felt close to her and his maternal uncle Wang Feng (d. 22 BCE), since according to the *Hanshu* the trio were “united in their worry and fear” when Chengdi’s father, Yuandi, considered removing Chengdi as heir (*Hanshu* 96.4016–17). At the same time, Chengdi as emperor fully recognized the danger that the Wang family posed, and he actively sought to control the Wang influence. For example, early in his reign Chengdi met privately with Wang Zhang to discuss Wang Feng’s removal, but ultimately the emperor imprisoned Wang Zhang after Wang Feng found out about their discussions (*Hanshu* 96.4020–23). See also n. 32 below and Shao-yun Yang’s chapter in this volume.
- 26 The appendix, below, provides translations of the three reform proposals. See *Hanshu* 86.3481 for He Wu and Zhai Fangjin’s friendship. As Wu and Fangjin jointly proposed each of the reforms in quick succession, they must have shared an understanding of the institutional problems that needed to be addressed, as well as the ideal structure of governance that they hoped to realize.
- 27 The statement is found in the reformers’ proposals; see this chapter’s appendix. He Wu and Zhai Fangjin were among a long line of reformers to identify “discrete responsibilities” as keys to enlightened governance. Sima Tan (d. 110 BCE) in his essay “Yao zhi” (“Essential Tenets”),

- praised the “legal specialists” (*fajia*), who “clearly divided responsibilities (*fen zhi*) to prevent officials from encroaching upon each other” (*Shiji* 130.3291). Wu and Fangjin used strikingly similar language in their proposals.
- 28 Over the course of Western Han, several systems were established for identifying and promoting worthy candidates for office. Governors, kingdom ministers, the Nine Ministers in the capital, and the Regional Inspectors were all required to make such recommendations. Evaluating and recommending officials thus became a key responsibility and privilege of high office. See Fukui 1988; Loewe 2004; de Crespigny 2007.
- 29 *Hanshu* 60.2667.
- 30 In early Western Han, members of the Lü family accumulated noble titles and nearly toppled the government. After the death of Wudi, the Huo family monopolized high offices, prompting Ban Gu to write famously that the family “took root in and occupied the court” (*Hanshu* 68.2948).
- 31 Kamiya 2009, 322–25. This strategy was in contrast, Kamiya Masakazu argues, to the approach of the Huo family during Zhaodi’s reign and Shi Xian during Yuandi’s reign, since both the Huo family and Shi Xian almost exclusively appointed their supporters to positions at court. Kamiya details the career paths of eight officials specifically connected by recommendations from Wang family members and who served in regional administrative posts before achieving 2,000-bushel positions. To take one example, Wang Feng initially installed Xiao Yu as a subordinate in his own bureau, after which Xiao moved through various local and regional administrative positions, including Prefect of Maoling, Colonel of Internal Security, Regional Inspector of Jizhou, Regional Inspector of Qingzhou, and Governor of Taishan (*Hanshu* 78.3289). Kamiya misses the example of He Wu, who was recommended by Wang Yin to be Advisory Counsellor and then appointed to be Regional Inspector of Yangzhou. (*Hanshu* 86.3482). He Wu, of course, eventually rose to become Imperial Counsellor.
- 32 The official in question was Wang Zhang (no relation to the empress dowager’s family). As the *Hanshu*’s description of this incident reveals, alliances must have been a commonly expected result of recommendations: “At this time the emperor’s uncle, the Grand General Wang Feng, controlled the government. Even though Feng had recommended Wang Zhang, Zhang objected to Feng’s monopoly of power and did not form a close attachment with him” (*Hanshu* 76.3238).
- 33 The example of Chen Tang, a military hero, is a case in point. Wang Feng and Wang Yin greatly esteemed Tang, but their younger brother, Wang Shang, despised him and had him exiled upon assuming the title of Marshal of State (*Hanshu* 84.3418).
- 34 In a related vein, Hölkeskamp 2010, 30–39, emphasizes that patron-client alliances in the late Roman republic were prone to fracture and required continual renewal and reaffirmation.
- 35 For example, after the emperor’s uncles Wang Shang, Wang Li, and Wang Gen were detained for their excessively lavish lifestyles, they collectively appealed to the empress dowager for support; and their eldest brother, Wang Yin, managed a successful appeal for clemency (*Hanshu* 98.4025).
- 36 Gu Yong (d. ca. 8 BCE) is an instructive example in this regard, since according to the *Hanshu* he actively attempted to curry favor with Wang Feng (*Hanshu* 85.3451–54) and later enjoyed good relations with Wang Tan. But, when Tan was passed up to succeed Wang Feng as Marshal of State and director of the government in favor of Wang Yin, Gu Yong’s stock took a tumble. Tan and Yin grew apart, and the latter directed some of his ire against Gu Yong. *Hanshu* 85.3455–56.
- 37 *Hanshu* 86.3481, 84.3411.
- 38 Both Zhai Fangjin and He Wu studied under Academicians in Chang’an, with Fangjin mastering the *Zuo* commentaries to the *Annals* and Wu, the *Changes*. Zhai Fangjin gained notice for

scrupulously adhering to the statutes when he was Regional Inspector. He Wu was punctilious in preparing his reports and he decided the case against Dai Sheng impartially, reversing his death sentence, even though Sheng had previously criticized He Wu at court. For Zhai Fangjin, see *Hanshu* 84.8412, 99.3618; for He Wu, see *Hanshu* 86.3481–82.

39 *Hanshu* 86.3482.

40 *Hanshu* 84.3416. The construction of Chengdi's mausoleum at Changling had provided opportunities for speculation and graft among the rich and powerful families of Chang'an.

41 *Hanshu* 86.3485.

42 *Hanshu* 60.2679.

43 The only explicit example I have found comes from Wang Zhang (no relation; see n. 32 above), who died in prison after he submitted a statement to Chengdi urging the emperor to get rid of Wang Feng. The statement included an accusation that Feng had installed his wife's younger sister, previously married to a man of low status, in the palace on the pretext that she would be able to bear Chengdi a son, when in fact Feng was acting purely to secure his own interests (*Hanshu* 98.4023).

44 The *Hanshu* says that He Wu submitted the Executive Council proposal while he was still serving as Commissioner of Trials (Tingwei) from 10 to 8 BCE. After Zhang Yu agreed that the reform should be enacted, Chengdi established the Executive Council in the fourth month of the first year of Suihe. He Wu was no longer the Commissioner of Trials, having been appointed Imperial Counsellor two months prior; his title was simply changed to Da Sikong (*Hanshu* 83.3404–05).

45 Zhang Yu for some time had been in outright conflict with Wang Gen, then the Marshal of State. Wang Gen had previously criticized Zhang Yu for requesting burial land near Pingling, Zhao di's (r. 86–74 BCE) mausoleum. Chengdi ignored Wang Gen's concerns, but thereafter Wang Gen persistently criticized and slandered Zhang (*Hanshu* 81.3350). Given the bad blood between Zhang Yu and Wang Gen, Zhang possibly saw the Executive Council reforms as an opportunity to neutralize Gen in a manner that left Zhang's hands relatively clean. Indeed, we are told that Zhang was so afraid that his own sons would be harmed by Wang Gen that he put in a good word for the Wang family to the emperor when other officials blamed them for a series of portents. (*Hanshu* 81.3351). The timing of these incidents is unclear, but the *Hanshu* dates the portents in question to the Yongshi (16–12 BCE) and Yuanyan (12–8 BCE) reign periods, which means Zhang put in that good word about the same time that he lent his support to the 8 BCE reforms. Accordingly, Zhang appears to have been simultaneously working defense and offense, acting cautiously and supportively toward members of the Wang family when necessary and exploiting opportunities to take them down when possible.

46 *Hanshu* 83.3405.

47 Zhu Bo stated that these positions went to Shepherds whose abilities were at the "highest level" (*gao di*) (*Hanshu* 83.3406).

48 Between 8 and 6 BCE, when Aidi rescinded the 8 BCE reforms of the Executive Council and the Inspectorate, no Governor or kingdom Minister managed to achieve a 2,000-bushel post in Chang'an, suggesting that the emperor and Executive Council could more effectively control who was placed in ministerial positions at the capital. See Kamiya 2009, 311.

49 Note, as well, that in 8 BCE Wujiang Long was appointed to be Provincial Shepherd of Jizhou. Wujiang had initially received a post as Advisory Counsellor under Wang Yin's sponsorship, but after he submitted a memorial requesting Chengdi to move Liu Xin (the future Aidi) to Chang'an, he was promoted to the newly created post of Provincial Shepherd. See *Hanshu* 77.3263–4. The promotion shifted a potential client of the Wang family to the direct oversight and evaluation of the emperor and his Executive Council.

50 For Wang's retirement and awards, see *Hanshu* 98.4027. Chengdi increased Wang Gen's sine-

- cure by five thousand households and the lavish gifts were a chariot and 500 catties of gold. In 8 BCE, Wang Gen had just supported Aidi's successful installation as heir to the throne. Perhaps he saw an opportunity to remove himself while he could, since he had accepted bribes and built up an opulent residence whose luxury rivaled that enjoyed by the emperor himself. These offenses came under close scrutiny in memorials submitted against Wang Gen after Aidi came to the throne in 7 BCE (*Hanshu* 98.4028).
- 51 *Hanshu* 83.3405. As noted earlier, the Chancellor Zhu Bo managed to convince Aidi, Chengdi's successor, to rescind the reforms. Zhu argued that they had disrupted the old promotional hierarchy whereby the Imperial Counsellor gained experience before moving into the position of Chancellor, and had prevented the Provincial Shepherds from actually doing their job of inspecting the provinces (*Hanshu* 83.3405–6). In 8 BCE, Zhai Fangjin had managed to remove Zhu Bo from his position as General of the Rear (Hou Jiangjun), saying that Zhu had supported the emperor's uncle Wang Li, who was then under indictment (*Hanshu* 84.3419). Given this conflict between Zhu Bo and Zhai Fangjin, Zhu was more than likely one of the opponents of the reforms with links to the Wang family.
- 52 The calls by Zhai Fangjin and He Wu to reform the Inspectorate particularly emphasized this problem with the chain of command. Many scholars have noted the controversy inspired by the lower rank of Regional Inspectors vis-à-vis the Governors and kingdom Ministers—controversy that was heard from when Wudi first established the positions. De Crespigny 2007 emphasizes that the 8 BCE reform of the Inspectorate responded to these concerns and completely transformed Wudi's model. However, as the evidence assembled in this chapter reflects, the 8 BCE reforms cannot be cast solely as reactions against Wudi's policies. For a helpful overview of the gradual incorporation of ad hoc inspectors and monitors into the larger bureaucratic structure, see Liao Boyuan 2006.
- 53 In 18 BCE, Zhai Fangjin was promoted from Deputy to the Chancellor to Governor of the Capital (Jingzhao Yin) (*Hanshu* 19b.833), a position hardly distinguishable from a ministerial post, in that the Governor was expected to participate regularly in court debates and policy discussions; see An and Xiong 2006, 534.
- 54 *Hanshu* 84.3412.
- 55 Bielenstein 1980, 8; An and Xiong 2006, 36–37.
- 56 Bielenstein 1980, 84–85, notes that the only difference between the Colonel of Internal Security and the Regional Inspectors was that (prior to 8 BCE) the former was higher in rank, at 2,000 bushels, and retained the staff of authority that allowed him to act in the name of the emperor. See also Kamada 1962, 291–92; An and Xiong 2006, 498–505.
- 57 *Hanshu* 84.3414. In this particular case “precedent” outweighed rank: according to precedent, the Colonel of Internal Security, ranked at 2,000 bushels, held more authority than the Deputy to the Chancellor at equivalent to 2,000 bushels.
- 58 *Hanshu* 84.3413.
- 59 *Hanshu* 84.3414.
- 60 Following Yan Shigu's (581–645 CE) interpretation, based on citation of the *Han jiuyi* (*Hanshu* 84.3414).
- 61 A reference to the *Analects* 17.12: “The Master said: ‘The coward who assumes fierce looks—to borrow a crude image—is like a cutpurse who sneaks over the wall.’” This translation follows Leys 1997, 87.
- 62 *Hanshu* 84.3414.
- 63 Works on Liu Xiang in Chinese and Japanese are too numerous to cite here, though Qian Mu 1947 remains a foundational work, as noted in Hinsch 2005; see *ECT* for details. Scholars typically cite Liu Xiang's “anti-eunuch” and “anti-consort family” stances as key to his political and intellectual orientation, though Liu was probably less interested in attacking whole categories of

people than specific persons and issues. See, for example, Ikeda Shūzō 1978, 111; Hsü [1978–80] 2001, 34–35. Liu Xiang’s biography in the *Hanshu* clearly links his politics and ideas to clashes with members of these groups (*Hanshu* 36.1930–31).

- 64 For details on the library project and Liu Xiang’s role, see Nylan 2011b; also Loewe’s chapters in this volume.
- 65 See *Hanshu* 36.1957–58; Hinsch 2005, 153–57. Note that Liu Xiang died in 8 BCE. We can only speculate about the effect of his death on the promulgation and approval of the reforms.
- 66 In *Shuiyuan*, *juan* 1 (“Jun dao”) alone, Liu Xiang discusses the structure of and official positions within many legendary or ancient courts, including those of Yao, Shun, and Yu, King Tang of Yin, the Duke of Zhou (Zhougong), King Cheng of Zhou, Lord Huan (Huangong) of Qi, King Zhao of Yan, and King Zhuang of Chu.
- 67 Translations of these titles are tentative. Works consulted include *Biographical Dictionary*; Bielenstein 1980; Major et al. 2010.
- 68 *Shuiyuan*, *juan* 1 (“Jun dao”), in Cheng Xiang 2009, 10.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 70 See, for example, Kongzi’s (Confucius’s) description of Lord Ling (Linggong) in the kingdom of Wei, from *juan* 8, “Zun xian” (“Venerating Worthies”), in Cheng Xiang 2009, 209–10. For a more detailed investigation of this subject, with reference to the *Shuiyuan*, see Rouzer 2006. For a thorough exploration of theories of ruler-minister relations in pre-imperial texts, see Pines 2002.
- 71 This statement is from He Wu’s initial proposal for the Executive Council reforms. See this chapter’s appendix.
- 72 Even if modern scholars of courts, described earlier in this chapter, have recently moved away from “autocracy,” the notion persists in many treatments of early Chinese politics. On this problem, see Hou Xudong 2008.
- 73 This was the paradigm and perspective of Norbert Elias. Subsequent critiques of Elias’s work have nevertheless retained the focus on beginnings in order to demonstrate that establishment of court institutions was rooted in a power-building process equally implicating rulers, nobles, and officials. Paterson 2007 presents such an analysis in a study of early imperial Rome.
- 74 This fact, of course, is no less true of contemporary political institutions. Historians and social scientists alike have emphasized the importance of path dependence in the development of institutions, as well as their “stickiness” and the difficulties inherent to reforming them. See, for example, Pierson 2004 and Fukuyama 2011. For junctures in institutional change, see Sewell 2005.
- 75 Spawforth 2007 notes the comparative dearth of scholarship on ancient courts. Greenhalgh 2008 shows how politics, scientific knowledge, and demographic shifts all combined to create a fundamental institutional change in the late twentieth-century People’s Republic of China.
- 76 My rendering here follows the interpretation of Yan Shigu, who explained the phrase as “to make the commoners trust the officials and peacefully attach to them.” See *Hanshu buzhu* 86.1505b.

The Suburban Sacrifice Reforms and the Evolution of the Imperial Sacrifices

Tian Tian 田天

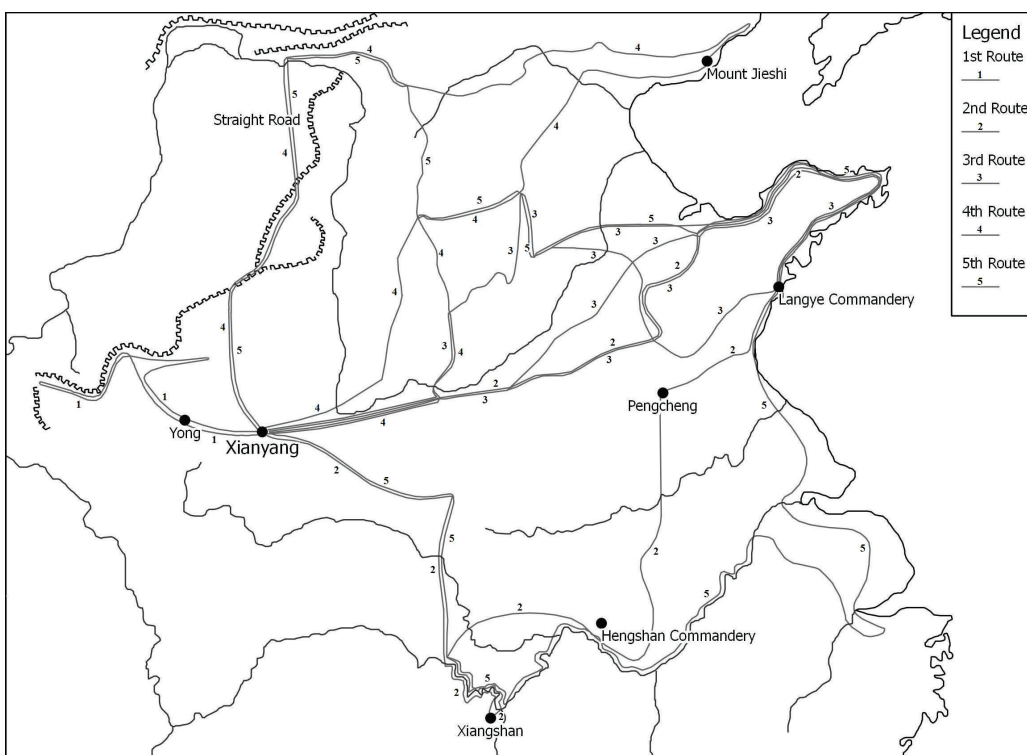
FROM EARLY EASTERN HAN (25–220 CE) TO 1911 CE, EMPERORS PERFORMED the highest-level sacrifices in the southern suburbs of the capital, organized on behalf of the ruling family, in which they worshipped Heaven and Earth as well as a host of other gods. Such practices represented a major departure from those of Qin (221–210 BCE) and Western Han (206 BCE–9 CE), not to mention the Zhanguo period (475–222 BCE). In the pre-unification period, Qin rulers had embraced a broad range of cultic beliefs and practices disseminated throughout the “area within the passes” (Guanzhong) (see Maps I.01, I.05a–b), though the cults centered on the city of Yong. After Qin’s conquest of the other Warring States in 221 BCE, the Qin court incorporated many cults of the Six Kingdoms (to the east of Qin) into its new imperial sacrifices, perhaps most importantly the cults dedicated to the mountains and rivers in the lands outside pre-imperial Qin and the cult to the Eight Divine Hosts of Qi.¹ Western Han, the first stable empire after the short-lived Qin, especially during the early reigns from Gaozu (206–195 BCE) through Jingdi (157–141 BCE), generally adopted the Qin empire’s sacrificial program, including its altars at Yong and its shrine to Chen Bao.² Mid-Western Han, specifically the reign of Han Wudi (141–87 BCE), saw the Han court establish many new shrines, however. Wudi’s most significant innovations were the altar to Taiyi (the Grand Unity, at the Tai Zhi), at Sweet Springs (Ganquan), and to Houtu (Sovereign Earth), at Fenyin.³ Meanwhile, Wudi refurbished and expanded many earlier shrines, retaining the practices inherited from the preceding Han emperors. Wudi’s cults differed greatly from the Eastern Han suburban sacrifices in two crucial respects:

the imperial worship sites existed throughout Wudi's realm, and his court made few if any efforts to integrate the many gods who were the objects of sacrifice.⁴

Long after Wudi's era, during the reigns of Yuandi (49–33 BCE) and Chengdi (33–7 BCE), as part of a wider court movement to “restore antiquity” (*fugu*), calls for reforms to the imperial cults became increasingly insistent. From circa 33 BCE onward, the reform efforts met with partial success, until in 5 CE Pingdi, presumably under the influence of Wang Mang (in power 1–8 CE; r. 9–23 CE, emperor), implemented reforms that decisively changed imperial cult practices.⁵ Prominent scholars in China, Japan, Europe, and the United States have weighed in on these changes.⁶ Given the evidence for the increasing influence of the classicists (*ru*) during late Western Han, many scholars have attributed the reforms to increased classicist influence, without taking into account sharp divisions among classicists or the wider political context that paved the way for the eventual success of the reforms. Many scholars have also tended to discount the persistence, despite the Wang Mang reforms, of older practices and regional differences. For these reasons, this well-researched topic merits yet another study.

The best of current scholarship, including several fine studies by Marianne Bujard, pays remarkably little attention to the decisions by the Qin and Western Han emperors to participate in sacrifices to deities throughout the realm, in person or through their bureaucratic representatives, even when they deemed such sacrifices to be “local” and so less important than the “state” sacrifices.⁷ This ignores the indisputable fact that even sacrifices conducted customarily in localities far distant from the capital could be an integral part of the imperial sacrifices, so long as the highest bureaucrat in the capital charged with overseeing the state sacrifices was put in charge of the performances.⁸ Scholars also frequently fail to appreciate the differences between the early reform efforts led by Kuang Heng and the more mature reforms under Wang Mang's direction, assuming the early reforms to be more systematic and exclusive than they actually were.⁹ This chapter strives to present a more nuanced picture of ritual reforms in Han, examining discrete developments that over time entirely recast the nature and focus of the sacrifices as they had been performed by the early Western Han emperors, the effective ritual heads for the Han ruling house. Present-day students of early Chinese history cannot but be struck by the changed character of the objects of imperial worship between Qin and late Western Han. Many once licit sites later became deemed illicit (*yin*), perhaps because their worship could not be easily accommodated within the classicists' accounts, which anachronistically ascribed a coherent system of imperial practices and beliefs to a millennium or more earlier.¹⁰

Of necessity, this chapter relies primarily on the two main sources that we have at our disposal, the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*) and the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*). The chapter first describes the imperial sacrifices offered during the century or so from the Qin dynasty to Han Wudi's reign. It then examines the motives that drove critics in late Western Han to attempt to modify the earlier forms of imperial sacrifices, which eventually resulted in their replacement, during Wang Mang's regency under



MAP 10.01 The First Emperor's travel routes, 221–210 BCE. Map generated by Daniel Shultz, after an unpublished map by Ma Baochun, Capital Normal University, Beijing.

Han Pingdi, by suburban sacrifices conducted solely at sites located south of the capital, Chang'an.

The Imperial Sacrifices of Qin and Early Western Han

Following unification of the Central States in 221 BCE, the First Emperor of Qin (Qin Shihuang) added the major sacrifices of the pre-unification Six Kingdoms to his own ritual schedule (Map 10.01).¹¹ During his first ten years on the throne, he went out from the capital on imperial progresses no fewer than five times, on average every two years. Many of these “tours of inspection” took him far from his capital, to newly conquered areas in the east. Partly motivated by a desire to display his unrivaled power and authority to the former aristocrats of the east, he also intended to appropriate their cults, so that he might call upon all the gods in his realm to support his claims of legitimacy against potential rivals who had enjoyed power in the preconquest era.

The First Emperor's first imperial progress, made in 220 BCE, very shortly after he had unified the empire, took him to the northwestern frontier to ensure the security of that border. Convinced by that tour that his “back,” the northwestern frontier, was stable

and well defended, the First Emperor turned his attention eastward to the lands once held by the defeated Six Kingdoms.¹² Accordingly, his four later tours, each intended to stabilize one or more portions of the North China Plain, took him to the so-called Three Jin (San Jin) area and the old Zhou lands in the Yellow River valley, to Lu and Qi in the northeast, and to the old Chu territories to the southeast. In the progress of 219 BCE, for example, the First Emperor spent the most time in the Shandong Peninsula carrying out sacrifices. He visited and worshipped at many sites dedicated to the old eastern gods; as soon as the offerings were made, he announced to the empire his expanded cosmic powers, so as to reinforce the notion that all political power was now concentrated in his hands. Significantly, to conduct these supposedly “archaic” sacrifices, notably the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices at Mount Tai in Shandong,¹³ he merely borrowed ritual formulae and practices from Yong, the chief pre-imperial worship site for the Qin royal house. While ostensibly paying high honor to the local deities, insofar as he offered solemn sacrifices to them, he made no attempt to fully understand or incorporate the older eastern practices in his worship of those deities; he evidently preferred to impose the existing Qin practices on the older stratum of beliefs and practices.¹⁴

From Shandong, the First Emperor made a detour to Pengcheng, along the middle reaches of the Si River in the former Chu territory, so that he might show himself to the local population “retrieving the Zhou tripods.” In this way, he sought to prove, insofar as the tripod symbolized stability, that the empire under his command was now on a firm basis, with Qin the rightful successor to Zhou.¹⁵ From Pengcheng the First Emperor continued south to Hengshan Commandery and Mount Xiang before returning to his capital, Xianyang.¹⁶ After a third tour in 218 BCE, his fourth tour in 215 BCE took him to Jieshi, on the northeastern seacoast, and all along the northern frontiers; he returned to his capital via the Straight Road, supposedly constructed by his general Meng Tian. The First Emperor’s final progress, in 210 BCE, the year of his death, took him down the Yangzi River to the former Chu territories, after which he traveled back along the seacoast to Langye, in order to visit the worship site of the Eight Divine Hosts.

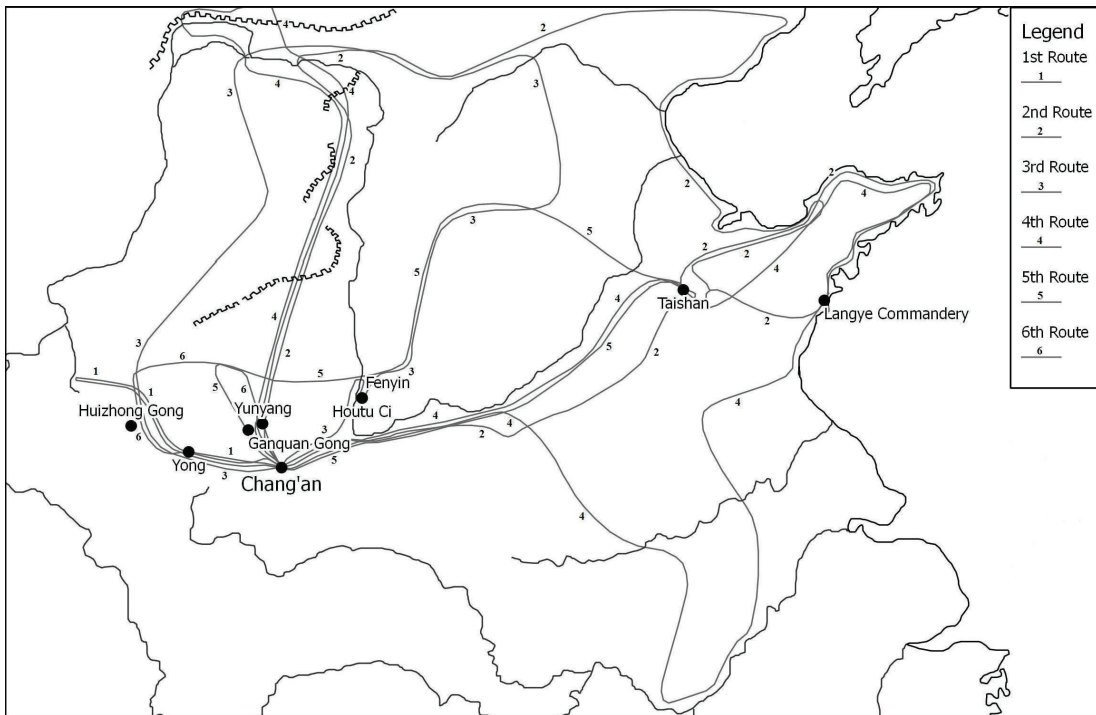
In making these five extended imperial progresses, the First Emperor’s ultimate aim may well have been to ensure that all power and authority was concentrated in his imperial capital at Xianyang, in the northwest, but an interim goal was surely to secure the allegiance of the old Six Kingdoms population. His tours frequently displayed his person and proclaimed his authority through military parades and reviews that demonstrated both the power of the Qin armies and the potential price of resistance.¹⁷ But as a matter of diplomacy the First Emperor also offered sacrifices at the most sacred sites in the regions that he visited. Recall that during these imperial progresses, the First Emperor established very few new cults; in the main he was content to be seen worshipping at the same cult sites that had been maintained in the pre-unification period by the local lords and their underlings. It seems, then, that the First Emperor (and later, the Second) appropriated the cults in the eastern part of the empire as one aspect of subordinating the four directions to the imperial capital.

The position of the Qin capital of Xianyang, from the time of Lord Xiao of Qin (r. 362–338 BCE) down to the First Emperor, was key to Qin's centralizing strategy. The First Emperor took steps to show the correspondence between his capital, his person, and the astral deities. Among the many new palaces that he built south of Xianyang¹⁸ was the huge Xin Palace, later called the Pole (Ji) Temple. He had a road constructed from the Pole Temple to Lishan, the site of his massive mausoleum complex, designating this road as the procession route along which his ritual caps and gowns were to travel from the capital after his death.¹⁹ He also ordered construction to begin on a new set of structures at Epang, not far from Lishan.²⁰ In the imperial strategy, the Epang Palace was to serve as the material instantiation of the imperial powers, just as the stars and astral deities—in particular the North Pole (Polaris; in Chinese, *Beiji Xing*)—corresponded to the imperial person; after the First Emperor's death the Ji Temple was to become the earthly counterpart to his astral presence.²¹ A system of enclosed walkways and roadways (*gedao*) “would stretch from the palace straight to the Southern Mountains” (Nan Shan); after the construction of this *gedao*, he could take the peaks of the Southern Mountains as the high “watchtowers”²² for his capital, thereby situating the mountains and the capital within a single cosmic and political order. Thus even relatively small mountains and rivers near Xianyang were granted a sacrificial status almost equal to that of the deities for the great mountains and rivers elsewhere,²³ in order to transform the nearby natural mountains and rivers into layers of sacred protection for the Qin center of political power.

While steps were taken to elevate Xianyang to the status of sacred capital of the new empire, Xianyang city itself still lacked an important cult site, aside from the suburban site where the *wang* sacrifice was held.²⁴ For the First Emperor's entire reign, first as king and then as emperor of the newly unified empire, Yong, a former Qin capital located quite a distance west of Xianyang,²⁵ remained the most important religious site for the dynasty, for it was in Yong that the First Emperor offered sacrifices to his predecessors. Because the First Emperor continued to engage in various political activities there (and not just in Xianyang),²⁶ Yong's position essentially did not decline under the Qin empire; the emperor continued to worship annually at the four altars at Yong and the shrine to Chen Bao.²⁷ As Map 10.01 shows, the First Emperor's sacrifices were essentially “outward-looking” in character.

Imperial Sacrifices from the Time of Wudi

A comparison of the imperial progresses made by the First Emperor and Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE) shows that Wudi visited the Chu region much less often than the First Emperor, even though he made many more imperial progresses. Presumably the fewer visits were because the south, less important strategically and economically than the east, no longer posed much of a threat to imperial power by Wudi's time. The same comparison shows that Wudi's imperial progresses also followed routes appreciably



MAP 10.02 Wudi's travel routes, 141–87 BCE. Map generated by Daniel Shultz.

more complicated than those of the First Emperor, which means that Wudi's delineation of sacrificial space did not merely imitate that associated with the First Emperor (Map 10.02; and see Map I.05a). Wudi focused on three main sites (not one): Mount Tai and Sweet Springs, in addition to Yong.

Most of Wudi's trips outside the capital region were either eastern progresses centering on the Shandong Peninsula or westward tours of inspection, including trips to Yong and Sweet Springs slightly to the north and west.²⁸ On the Shandong Peninsula there were three cults important to Wudi: the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices at Mount Tai; the Eight Divine Hosts shrines;²⁹ and the sites associated with the immortality cults on the seacoast. On the Shandong Peninsula, in 104 BCE, Wudi set up an altar site dubbed the Bright Hall (Ming Tang),³⁰ and he had the kings and nobles pay court to him there (presumably building them residences there). He received the yearly accounts (*ji*) from the commanderies and kingdoms at Mount Tai, in addition to performing the *feng* and *shan* at Mount Tai.³¹ We should therefore regard Mount Tai as a political center no less than a cult site.³² Meanwhile, Mount Tai served as the focal point for a number of secondary cults throughout the peninsula.

In contrast to the long journey to Mount Tai, the distance to Yong was comparatively short, and so it did not require the major logistical preparations needed for journeys to Mount Tai. That said, the trips to Yong from the Qin and Han capitals crossed

territories that were sometimes less than secure. On these trips, the First Emperor had often stopped at the Huizhong (Returning to the Center) Palace, to the northwest of Yong.³³ But that palace was razed in 167 BCE, when the Xiongnu made deep incursions into Han lands, venturing even into the Sweet Springs parklands, during the fourteenth year of Wendi's reign (r. 180–157 BCE).³⁴ Sixty years later, in 107 BCE, Wudi ordered the rebuilding of the Huizhong Palace after an inspection of the damage,³⁵ and thereafter he often coupled imperial visits to Yong with preparations against further Xiongnu incursions.³⁶ Although Wudi in the last part of his reign visited the altars at Yong (now increased in number from four to five) less often than before, the continuing strategic importance of the area ensured that the Yong sacrifices would retain their old significance for the dynasty for the duration of Wudi's reign.³⁷

From 112 BCE on, however, with the establishment of the Tai altars at Sweet Springs, Wudi's palace there became a major center for all ritual activities within the Guanzhong basin, including the imperial sacrifices. Judging from the extant records, Wudi personally offered sacrifices there on at least ten occasions, in 112, 110, 106, 104, 100 (twice), 94, 91, 89, and 88 BCE. Presumably, at first the sacrifices at the Tai altars at Sweet Springs were considered less important than the sacrifices begun long before at the Five Altars in Yong. But over time, as more imperial visits were made to Sweet Springs and fewer to Yong, the Sweet Springs sacrifices evidently came to overshadow those at Yong. Certainly the Tai altars at Sweet Springs, dedicated to the solemn worship of Heaven, were intended to be the exact counterpart to the older cult site for Houtu at Fenyin. Indeed, the sacrifices offered to Heaven and Earth became the premier sacrifices in the ritual schedule for the emperor acting on behalf of his ruling line, although this would change in late Western Han. Arguably, the aforementioned innovations under Wudi did much to change the structure of sacrificial observances, insofar as Wudi ordered the Sweet Springs Palace at Yunyang, originally an imperial traveling palace, converted into a sacrificial center.

Unlike the First Emperor, Wudi never sought to assert the sacred character of his capital at Chang'an, even though he both engaged in the customary worship at the capital's ancestral temples and mausoleum complexes, and established an altar to Taiyi in Chang'an's southeastern suburbs.³⁸ Instead, Wudi made many tours of inspection, partly so that he might observe local conditions and investigate the conduct of his local officials, and partly so that he might personally perform a range of sacrifices to the high gods whose worship sites lay far from the capital. Instead of worshipping the small rivers and mountains near his capital, as the First Emperor had done, Wudi emphasized the cults to the Five Marchmounts and Four Rivers, as well as to other mountains and rivers throughout his domain. Wudi therefore made sure that the lands on which the Five Marchmounts were located—most of which the early Western Han emperors had allotted to kings and nobles—became part of the centrally administered commandery-county system.³⁹ As Han imperial power grew stronger and more of its political functions were centralized at the capital, the Han court became increasingly convinced

of its right to act as final arbiter of the relative ranking of the various cults.⁴⁰ Whether at Taishan, at Yong, or at Ganquan, or indeed at any other imperial cult site, the emperor felt compelled to worship the gods in their own base areas.

In sum, for well over a century, from Qin to mid-Western Han, the imperial cultic activities often took place at different cult sites located some distance from the capital. The official capital—Xianyang or Chang'an—never functioned as the principal center of sacrificial observances within the imperial cult. As the important cult sites such as Yong, Sweet Springs, and Mount Tai often served as centers of political and administrative activities, this dispersal of cult sites over a very wide area might well have diluted the importance of the imperial capital. Probably the decision to combine political progresses with cultic activities at key sites was aimed at building a “control network” throughout the empire.

Opening Up New Discursive Spaces

As the Japanese scholar Nagata Hidemasa (b. 1933 CE) has pointed out, the imperial administrative procedures were only gradually worked out over the course of Qin and Western Han.⁴¹ During this time the inhabitants of the far-flung commanderies and counties gradually grew accustomed to rule by the imperial court, and the court perfected its techniques for supervision and control. This long-term trend shrinking the area of sacrificial space deemed of vital importance to the empire and its ruling line, which began during the reign of Xuandi (74–48 BCE), was intrinsically (and inversely) tied to the imperial court's increasing success in administering the outlying areas. Simply put, there was less reason for the emperor to travel long distances to worship the local gods and to reassert his power periodically over far-flung regions; moreover, the increasing geographic concentration of the imperial sacrifices also enhanced the role of Chang'an as sacrificial and political center of the empire. This conjunction of factors led to the opening of a new discursive space in which ritual reforms could be discussed and their advantages to the imperial line assessed. Looking ahead, it is easy to see that Wang Mang's reforms in 5 CE only accelerated a centralizing tendency already in place, obviating any felt need to travel far and wide to supplicate the outlying gods. Had the hold of the Han imperium on the local regions been weak in 5 CE, in all likelihood these reforms could never have taken hold.⁴² That the court officials could openly debate ritual reforms in purely theoretical terms suggests that the court no longer felt under any threat from the localities (which is not to say that rebellions could not arise once central control loosened). Central to the reformers' agenda was that the imperial worship be performed in the ruler's capital, since that, they believed, had been the case in antiquity. Rather than the rulers traversing their empire to honor the gods, they maintained that “Heaven favors the true ruler wherever he resides.”⁴³

Another long-term trend that supported the reformers' cause was the court officials' increasing resentment of the role played in the imperial sacrifices by the *fangshi*,

or magi. The *fangshi* frequently initiated and administered new cults of a certain type, and until late Western Han these were seamlessly integrated into the regular schedule of imperial sacrifices.⁴⁴ Typically, the *fangshi* led worship ceremonies to local gods, exorcisms for anomalous events and weird objects; the *fangshi* were also in charge of matters relating to the imperial immortality cults, in which the emperor “waited upon the gods.” All such offerings were intimately linked to an emperor’s search for personal welfare.⁴⁵ Most of the Western Han emperors, and Wudi and Xuandi in particular, were preoccupied with these immortality cults, which until late Western Han existed within the imperial ritual system without perceived conflicts or contradictions with other sacrifices.

Beginning with Yuandi’s reign, however, court officials became preoccupied with an underlying flaw in the imperial sacrificial schedule, perhaps because they had been alerted to this flaw by Sima Qian’s treatment of Wudi’s sacrifices or were troubled by the sheer cost of maintaining the imperial sacrificial schedule: additions to or subtractions from that schedule increasingly seemed to be a function of the emperors’ personal desires for longevity or immortality, rather than changes to further the well-being of the entire realm.⁴⁶ Over the course of the three reigns from Yuandi to Aidi (r. 7–1 BCE), many *fangshi* attained high positions at court or in counties close to the capital, mainly because individual emperors believed their ministrations could induce the birth of a healthy heir or guarantee recovery from illness. The increased visibility of the *fangshi* in or near the capital caused great resentment among the members of the regular court bureaucracy, however. A memorial by Gu Yong, for example, plainly expresses deep dismay about the influence of the *fangshi* in policy making (see the translation of that memorial in Liu Tseng-kuei’s chapter).⁴⁷

In relation to the institution and disestablishment of cult sites, we can trace, first, a growing sentiment on the part of the regular court officials that the *fangshi* should not intervene in certain imperial sacrifices once routinely left to their management; and second, increasing objections, at least by some, to the well-established imperial precedent whereby an emperor nominated representatives to worship on *his* behalf, lest his ruling line suffer some loss of power and authority. Even though the reforms of Kuang Heng and Wang Mang did not seek to eliminate all *fangshi* or their arts, some of the court *fangshi* were effectively excluded from participation in the imperial sacrifices.⁴⁸ The once seamless integration within the imperial sacrificial schedule of specific types of worship approved by the classicists with services conducted by the *fangshi* was becoming a thing of the past.

Ritual Reforms under Chengdi and Aidi

With this background in mind, let us turn to the main subject of this chapter, the two ritual movements that spurred a series of sacrificial reforms during the reigns of Chengdi and Aidi. The first was led by Kuang Heng, during the early part of Chengdi’s

reign, and the second by a group of classicists who coalesced around the regent Wang Mang. Within three reigns and a mere thirty-year period, then, the original set of imperial sacrifices under the direct supervision of the Han imperial court was abandoned, to be ultimately replaced by a suburban sacrificial system that would endure for nearly two millennia, until the collapse of imperial rule in 1911. How this dramatic change came about is the subject of the present section.

In 32 BCE Chengdi set up two altars, north and south of the capital of Chang'an, at the same time that he disestablished the sacrifices at Sweet Springs and at Fenyin. In the second month of the following year, on the *xinsi* day, he offered his first sacrifice at the southern suburbs of Chang'an, followed in the third month by his first sacrifice to Houtu in the suburbs to the north.⁴⁹ According to the *Hanshu*'s "Treatise on the Suburban Sacrifices," the Chancellor Kuang Heng and the Imperial Secretary Zhang Tan were the principal advocates for instituting these suburban sacrifices. The treatise contains a record of Kuang Heng's memorial urging this change,⁵⁰ in which Kuang made three points: (1) the sacrifices at Sweet Springs and Fenyin were "not in accord with ancient regulations" (*bu he guzhi*); (2) the imperial person was at risk when traveling far from the capital to worship the gods; and (3) every lengthy trip by the emperor represented a heavier financial burden on some of his imperial subjects, since, by imperial decree, the local populations were charged with supplying the necessary funds, staples, and luxuries to the imperial entourage making its way through their areas. For reasons explained below, it seems that the second and third reasons carried less weight than the first. In any case, when Kuang Heng's memorial was referred to members of the court for their consideration, some fifty people backed Kuang's proposal, against eight opponents, the most important of whom was Xu Jia, Marshal of State and leading member of the Xu consort clan.⁵¹ In the formal imperial assent to Kuang Heng's proposal, the key phrase was this: "We need to abandon [vulgar] customs and restore antiquity, follow the sage's prescriptions, and fix the position of Heaven, in order to facilitate the ritual proceedings."⁵² The reformers claimed great antiquity for Kuang's proposals, which they argued had Western Zhou precedents.

This sort of ritual reform had been first proposed under Yuandi, Chengdi's father, by Yi Feng.⁵³ Both Kuang Heng and Yi Feng had studied with Hou Cang, a renowned ritual expert.⁵⁴ Another of the ritual reformers under Chengdi was Shi Dan, Kuang Heng's student,⁵⁵ who had been promoted with yet another of Hou Cang's students, Xiao Wangzhi.⁵⁶ Thus all the most important advocates of the suburban sacrificial reform that took place early in Chengdi's reign were either Hou Cang's own students or the students of his students.⁵⁷ Up to this time, the court classicists had never agreed upon a complete set of imperial rituals to be adopted by the Han rulers.⁵⁸ Apparently this had changed, at least for the group of reformers who regarded themselves as disciples of Hou Cang, once these disciples either attained high court positions or allied themselves with high-ranking bureaucrats. By the time of Yuandi, and especially of Chengdi, the ritual theories had been sufficiently elaborated that the classicists (or a subset of classi-

cists who thought of themselves ritual experts) began to propose reforms to the sacrifices offered on behalf of the ruling line. Still, the thinking behind these early proposals seems to have been relatively simple: the reformers seem to have been united less by a well-developed theory than by their desire to re-create the practices of the early Western Zhou period, a goal they hoped to achieve by promoting the capital as the most important sacrificial center, by attributing a more important role to Heaven over Taiyi, and by excising the existing imperial cults they considered excessive.

The *Hanshu*'s "Treatise on the Suburban Sacrifices," in summarizing the arguments in favor of instituting the southern suburban sacrifices,⁵⁹ speaks of Wang Shang,⁶⁰ who himself cited the *Rites Record* (*Liji*), the *Documents* classic (*Shangshu*), and other classic texts in urging the "correct position" (*zheng wei*) for the sacrifices offered to Heaven and Earth, seeing this as a first step to restoring the archaic Zhou practices. If the extant records can be trusted, these early discussions about ritual orientation never debated the ritual liturgy in great detail, however. Kuang Heng urged the "reform" of the Tai altars at Sweet Springs after the institution of suburban sacrifices had been approved.⁶¹ He disparaged the "extraneous decorations at the Purple Altar" (*zitan wei shi*) erected to Taiyi, declaring it to be a prime example of a cult site initiated under Wudi, whose favored practices diverged too sharply from those ascribed to the exemplary Zhou. In speaking of precedents, Kuang was not merely arguing for a "restoration of the old," nor was he promoting greater austerity at the cult sites. He urged the dismantlement of the Taiyi altar (but not most other established shrines), in order to advance his main objective, which was to establish the principal imperial altar in the capital's southern suburbs, in order to raise the status of the suburban sacrifices.⁶² That there is no mention of any specific proposals for a new Taiyi liturgy, either by Kuang Heng or by other members of the reformist faction, and only vague calls to "restore antiquity," suggests that the ritual reformers who agreed with Kuang Heng wished merely to add an additional layer to the preexisting ritual foundations of the Taiyi-Houtu cults,⁶³ rather than to fundamentally alter the nature of the imperial sacrifices.

A second facet of this early reform under Chengdi is equally noteworthy: the relocation to the suburbs of the sacrifices offered to Heaven and Earth was promptly followed by a thoroughgoing reevaluation of the entire set of gods to be worshipped in the imperial sacrifices. The imperial sacrifices at Yong (with its Five Altars) and at the Chen Bao shrine were soon ended.⁶⁴ At Kuang Heng's behest, the worship of both Taiyi and Houtu was also discontinued (eventually). The completion of this first stage of ritual reforms took place within a few months, in 32/31 BCE, marked on the *xinsi* day of the first month of spring by Chengdi's journey to the southern suburbs, to perform a sacrifice.⁶⁵

Some time after these aims were accomplished, Kuang Heng and Zhang Tan began urging the disestablishment of many of the remaining imperial shrines, on the grounds that the imperial provisioner in Chang'an had to supply no fewer than 683 separate cult sites with offerings and paraphernalia; of that number, Kuang and Zhang argued,

probably only 208 were worth retaining.⁶⁶ This second phase of proposals reveals once again that the reformers did not propose to change the entire basis of the Han imperial sacrifices; they wanted merely to eliminate approximately two-thirds of the cults and to combine the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth in the southern suburbs. Their expressed purpose was to bring the existing cults into greater “compliance with the [ancient] rites” (*ying li*).⁶⁷

Three treatises in the *Shiji* and *Hanshu* list more than 200 important shrines, a number that falls far short of Kuang Heng’s number of 683 separate cults. Given the available sources, we have no way of ascertaining the criteria by which Kuang Heng’s reformers judged whether a given worship site should be retained or abolished. But the extant materials support the conclusion that most of the cults to be “saved” were associated with the great mountains, rivers, or asterisms. Likewise, fifteen cult sites at Yong were deemed to accord with the ritual texts.⁶⁸ Kuang Heng and his allies were intent upon abolishing what now appear to have been duplicate shrines. For example, of the five altars for the Du Host, only one was to be preserved.⁶⁹ Moreover, many of the new cults first established in early Western Han were to be abandoned, especially those established by Wudi and Xuandi, Wudi’s great-grandson.⁷⁰ Originally these cult sites tended by *fangshi* had been created for a variety of reasons: to commemorate anomalous events, to foster the imperial immortality, or to engage in black magic. Thus Kuang Heng’s reforms also aimed to excise weird, occult practices.

In sum, the reform under Kuang Heng, probably propelled by Hou Cang’s teachings, advocated a “return to antiquity.” But presumably because of some limitations in the ritual teachings and texts they received from Hou Cang,⁷¹ the group around Kuang failed to formulate a systematic theory of sacrifice. So while the initial campaign, with its slogan “return to antiquity,” was meant to centralize certain aspects of the imperial cult, it did not envision a fundamental change to the theoretical basis on which the imperial cults rested. The reformers simply urged the throne to add and subtract cult sites, without challenging the core beliefs and practices associated with the older Western Han sacrificial rites. The reformers’ hope to combine the worship of Heaven and Earth with that of the Five Lords at the new southern suburban sacrificial site amounted to little more than a “cleaning up” of the old imperial cults that had been supervised by the *fangshi* for so long.

The “restore antiquity” movement had begun under Yuandi, but the transition between the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi seems to have been a crucial point in its development. Yuandi’s court was unable to reach any consensus regarding the imperial ancestral temples; from one year to the next, the leading officials changed their minds about the correct ceremonies.⁷² In 33 BCE, with the death of Yuandi in the fifth month,⁷³ his heir—posthumously dubbed Chengdi, the Accomplished Emperor—buried him with far greater simplicity than had characterized the funerals of Yuandi’s predecessors, eschewing all of the customary offerings of carriages, horses and cattle, and other birds and beasts that were deemed “not [in conformity] with the [Western Zhou]

rites.”⁷⁴ That Chengdi’s decision to change the court precedents occurred so early in his reign indicates that the “restore antiquity” faction was already ascendant by the time of Yuandi’s burial. Probably Kuang Heng, Chengdi’s tutor when he was heir apparent, had discussed such matters with him already; certainly Kuang used his influence with the new emperor to realize some of his other ideas. But less than a year after Chengdi ascended the throne, Kuang was accused of a crime and dismissed from high office. His opponents took advantage of this opportunity to register their doubts about the wisdom of Kuang’s ritual proposals, evidently fearing that events were moving too quickly.⁷⁵ Liu Xiang was one of the most important officials to argue against Kuang. A renowned omen expert, Liu was apprehensive about a great windstorm that had followed the disestablishment of the Tai altars; this windstorm had even been felt in the Bamboo Palace at Sweet Springs, where it cut down more than one hundred huge trees.⁷⁶ Increasingly uneasy about the occurrence of this disaster, Chengdi questioned Liu Xiang, who promptly produced a long disquisition in opposition to Kuang Heng’s reforms,⁷⁷ after which Chengdi had the two suburban sites dismantled.

It may be useful at this point to summarize events during Chengdi’s twenty-six-year reign: during his whole reign, Chengdi paid only a single visit to one of the suburban sites, that of 31 BCE.⁷⁸ For eighteen years, from the time of Liu Xiang’s memorial in 31 BCE until 14 BCE, the two suburban sites were not in operation. In 14 BCE, the cult sites for Taiyi and Houtu were restored at Sweet Springs and at Fenyin. But in 15 BCE, when Chengdi traveled to worship at the Five Altars at Yong, these altars had not yet been “properly restored” by imperial order. Thereafter, for a while Chengdi participated in a frenetic sacrificial schedule, outpacing even that of Han Wudi, in an apparent desire to compensate Taiyi, Houtu, and other deities for the lost decade and a half when he had not performed sacrifices to them.⁷⁹ This body of evidence suggests that Chengdi never reached a principled conclusion in favor of either the *fugu* reformers or their opponents. One additional piece of evidence tends to support the same picture: the seventeen-year-long lapse between Liu Xiang’s advice in 31 BCE and Chengdi’s reconstruction of the Taiyi and Houtu altars and abolition of the northern and southern suburban sacrificial sites in 14 BCE.

Nearly all modern scholars assume that the late Western Han ritual reforms reflected the ascendancy of classicists at the court, but the foregoing synopsis shows that this assumption needs to be qualified. At Chengdi’s court we find stark divisions among people who clearly all should be identified as classicists and no sign of a well-defined struggle or intellectual gap between the court classicists, on the one hand, and the members of some unidentified group, on the other—not even the *fangshi*. Liu Xiang, to take one example, was a leading classicist, but he sharply disputed Kuang Heng’s good judgment on this issue. Liu believed there was no precedent for Kuang and his allies’ reforms and that Kuang’s theories were thoroughly “misguided,” insofar as they advocated worship of “false gods,” since the ritual classics included no precise stipulations about the liturgies or regulations to be followed in the imperial worship of Heaven

and Earth. Moreover, earlier, in 34 BCE, Liu Xiang had strenuously objected to reform proposals concerning the imperial ancestral temple, which were advanced by Kuang Heng, Gong Yu, and Wei Xuancheng, after Yuandi had approved some of the group's proposals.⁸⁰

Only in 34 BCE, when Yuandi became critically ill, did Kuang Heng relent somewhat, allowing a restoration of all the imperial "chambers of rest" and worship halls in the Chang'an area, but not the reestablishment of the ancestral temples in the commanderies and kingdoms.⁸¹ Upon Chengdi's accession to the throne in 33 BCE, these "chambers of rest" and worship halls in the Chang'an area were immediately disbanded once again.⁸² Liu Xiang must have felt extremely unhappy about the elimination of so many ancestral shrines, since this represented a major departure from Liu clan precedents; he argued forcefully that, since the ritual classics provided no guidance in such matters, it would be best to follow the "filial way," adhering to the past practices of the reigning emperor's forebears. And, as the rest of Chengdi's reign witnessed so many natural disasters, Liu Xiang the omen expert repeatedly found pretexts for questioning the wisdom of Kuang Heng's reforms, especially within the context of the relations between the imperial clan and its ministers.⁸³

To Liu Xiang and his supporters, the early Western Han cult sites constituted the "yang *qi* old cults" (*yang qi jiu ci*); Liu Xiang moreover argued that the worship at the Chen Bao shrine had proven efficacious in the past and so deserved to be continued. Liu Xiang and his allies did not agree that the older cult sites were "not in conformity with [the Western Zhou] rites." This clash of views between Liu Xiang and Kuang Heng played itself out against the background of Kuang's close alliance with the eunuch Shi Xian (fl. 48–32 BCE),⁸⁴ a favorite of Yuandi whose influence Liu Xiang deplored.⁸⁵ When Liu Xiang was eventually imprisoned because of his opposition to Shi Xian, Wei Xuancheng and Gong Yu were among the several officials charged with investigating Liu's misdeeds, so Liu Xiang would not easily have allied himself with Wei and Gong during Chengdi's reign. Moreover, Liu Xiang had sharply disagreed with Kuang Heng and his allies over the right policy to use with the Xiongnu;⁸⁶ whereas Kuang Heng and his allies were highly dubious about a direct military confrontation with the Xiongnu, Chen Tang, Liu Xiang, and their allies were willing to risk one.⁸⁷ Thus Liu Xiang's objections to Kuang Heng's reforms may well have stemmed from a combination of political rivalry, theoretical disagreements, and personal animus, and almost certainly these factors increased the ferocity of Liu's opposition to Kuang. But more than one faction could form at court for various reasons, pragmatic, theoretical, or personal, and Liu Xiang was hardly the only opponent of Kuang Heng's reforms.⁸⁸

Behind Liu Xiang and Kuang Heng stood groups of officials at court whose identities and motivations, at this remove in time, can only be guessed. Thus the late Western Han suburban sacrifice and temple reforms cannot be explained as a result simply of the "classicists' influence," even though Yuandi, when Xuandi's heir, had already gained a reputation for his interest in *ru* techniques and his disapproval of some of his father's

policies.⁸⁹ Clearly, that Kuang Heng was able to secure a position among the Three Lords of the Executive Council lent force to the reformers. Even after Kuang Heng's dramatic fall from power in 30 or 29 BCE, others continued to advocate for his views. The Kuang Heng temple reforms introduced under Yuandi soon after his accession are symptomatic of a much larger trend at court, which would continue during the reign of Chengdi and the later Wang Mang regency. Such efforts, even though they met with only mixed success at first, were important in the long run as precedents.

Readers will recall that Kuang Heng's reforms in 31 BCE concerned the objects and numbers of worship sites, as well as the locations of the highest imperial sacrifices. Before the southern and northern suburban sacrifices were disbanded, the imperial ancestral temples erected in the kingdoms and commanderies had all been disestablished by one stroke of the brush, along with well over half of the local shrines and temples once patronized by the imperial court.⁹⁰ These decreases represented a major change in the Han sacrificial schedule. Not long after Chengdi restored the early Western Han sacrificial system in 14 BCE, he also resorted to the services of *fangshi* to "seek [his] good fortune."⁹¹ Apparently Chengdi was eventually persuaded that his lack of a male heir was the gods' retribution for his assent to the ritual reform program in 31 BCE. Aidi, in the very first year of his reign (6 BCE), on the urging of the dowager empress, "restored" the northern and southern suburban sacrifices at the same sites that Chengdi had erected in 31 BCE. But Aidi was himself in poor health and he or his advisers were no less superstitious than Chengdi, so barely a year after the restoration of the suburban sacrifices, in 4 BCE, Aidi decided to restore *all* the other cult sites, even those at shrines far from the capital, and to disestablish the suburban altars.⁹² At that point in Aidi's reign, we are told, the temples numbered "more than 700," a somewhat higher figure than the 683 that so troubled Kuang Heng.⁹³ Aidi also invited many magicians to Shanglin Park to carry out sacrifices for his personal welfare.⁹⁴ In addition, in 4 BCE, the Dowager Empress Wang also issued an edict restoring the sacrifices to Houtu at Fenying.⁹⁵ So, by 4 BCE, nearly all of the old gods in the early Western Han sacrificial schedule had been restored, and even more cults instituted.

To recapitulate: from 32 to 14 BCE, Chengdi carried out none of the regular sacrifices to Taiyi at Sweet Springs or to Houtu at Fenying, but the altars to Taiyi and Houtu were restored during the seven-year period from 14 to 7 or 6 BCE, around the time when Chengdi died. As noted above, shortly after Chengdi's death in 7 BCE, an edict by the Dowager Empress Wang reinstituted the suburban sacrifices as well,⁹⁶ though three years later, in 4 BCE, they were disestablished. We must remember that the ruling house had never before in Western Han history evinced any particular interest in determining the "correct" locations or "proper" number for the imperial cults. Thus no precedents existed on which to base court discussions of these issues. Consequently, every time the all-important question of the dynastic succession came up at court, the matter of the imperial sacrificial schedule came up for the court's review as well. "In the more than thirty years" that elapsed between Kuang Heng's reforms and

Wang Mang's reinstitution of the suburban sacrifices, "the cults to Heaven and Earth had been moved five times."⁹⁷ In the frequent reassessments of the imperial cults, we find some arguing that the Taiyi and Houtu sacrifices associated with Wudi should not outrank the older Western Han imperial sacrifices, since more of the pre-Wudi sacrifices were made on behalf of the empire's fortunes, rather than the emperor's personal welfare. Nonetheless, Kuang Heng's reforms, consciously or unconsciously, stopped well short of an all-out attack upon the sacrifices instituted by Wudi and associated with the *fangshi*; that sort of attack came only when Wang Mang rose to supreme power at the Han court.

The Yuanshi Ceremonies under Han Pingdi

It is only with the Yuanshi Ceremonies, instituted in 5 CE by Wang Mang at Pingdi's court, that we can truly begin to talk of a Han sacrificial *system* being more or less settled, since the same system of suburban sacrifices continued under Eastern Han and later dynasties. These ceremonies—suburban sacrifices that merged the discrete sacrifice once dedicated to Heaven with offerings to a wide range of gods—were to be augmented by sacrifices at six secondary altars (Fig. 10.01).

Contrary to most scholarship, careful examination of the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on Suburban Sacrifices" shows that the Yuanshi prescriptions associated with Wang Mang greatly vary from Kuang Heng's proposals.⁹⁸ First, judging from the extant materials, Wang Mang's conceptions of the imperial cult (or those of men in his inner circle of advisers) were far more developed than those of Kuang Heng and his court allies. Second, Wang Mang and his advisers apparently thought of the suburban sacrifices as a secure placeholder for the worship of a huge range of deities, including Heaven and Earth, the imperial ancestors, and hundreds of other gods. As the theoretical basis for his ideas, Wang Mang cited the "Spring Offices" section in the *Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*) that describes the Grand Music Master. Among that official's duties the *Zhouli* lists, not only supervising of musicians who perform the prescribed music during each sacrifice,⁹⁹ but also making the arrangements for all of the imperial cults, from the worship of Heaven on down to the offerings made to the ancestors of the ruling line and to lesser men of note. (The *Zhouli* repeatedly mentions the need to have all the kingly sacrifices encompassed within a single organized schedule.)¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Wang Mang adopted from the *Zhouli* and other classics and commentaries many particulars about the form and practice of royal sacrifice: the animals to be offered, the music to be played during the ceremonies, and so on. After his reform of the imperial suburban sacrifices, Wang Mang cited a *Documents* passage that referred to making a "burnt offering" (*yin*) to the Six Great Ones (Liu Zong), a collective object of cult whose precise content had long been disputed but that Wang and his circle took to mean the Sun and Moon, Thunder and Wind, and the chief mountains and great rivers,¹⁰¹ following the advice tendered by Liu Xin.¹⁰²

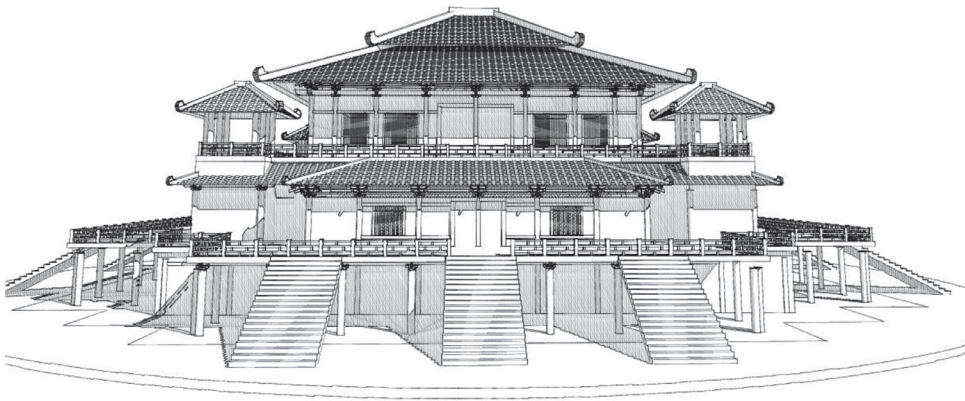


FIG. 10.01 Reconstruction of the ritual center (Ming Tang) built in 4 CE in the southern suburbs of Western Han Chang'an. Image generated by Eric Sweingarten for Michael Nylan, after the reconstructions found in *Zhongguo dabaike quanshu, kaoqu juan*, 161–62, and Steinhardt 1984, 71, 72, plates 3.1, 3.2.

This does not mean that Wang Mang, in setting up his version of the suburban sacrifices, slavishly followed the *Zhouli* (as some scholars allege); for example, that Han Gaozu and his empress would receive coadjutors' offerings was an entirely new idea. Moreover, Wang Mang folded what once were separate sacrifices to Heaven and Earth into a single imperial observance to Heaven and Earth in the suburbs of the capital: every year, on the first *xin* day of the first month, the emperor was himself to worship Heaven and Earth in the two suburbs, north and south. Then, at the summer and winter solstices, the emperor was to dispatch a representative from among his officials to offer separate sacrifices to Gaozu and his empress at these same sites. The range of deities addressed in the Yuanshi Ceremonies therefore included Heaven and Earth, the imperial ancestors, Sun and Moon, the chief mountains and rivers, and the local gods.¹⁰³ Additionally, the Grand Altar (Tai Zhi) was erected in the southern suburbs for the worship of more than one thousand gods, and five secondary altars were built in the four directions in the environs of Chang'an.¹⁰⁴ The worship of "all of the attendant gods" in the imperial pantheon was to be allocated among these sites.

By contrast, the extant relevant records, especially the "Treatise on Suburban Sacrifices," the *Zhouli*, and the *Yili* (*Ritual Ceremonies*), suggest that Kuang Heng's suburban altars were dedicated to the worship of Heaven on its own, to the Five Lords, and to Sun and Moon only; nowhere do these sources state that mountains, rivers, and stars should be worshipped at the suburban altars, as they had been at Yong. As readers will recall, Kuang Heng retained fifteen sacrifices at Yong, but we do not know the precise identity of the gods to whom offerings were made, just that they were associated with mountains, rivers, and asterisms. By contrast, Wang Mang erected Five Altars¹⁰⁵ in the Chang'an suburbs, along with his Grand Altar. The gods to whom Wang Mang made offerings at these six suburban altars included every

one of the Western Han deities who had been worshipped from Wudi's reign on, including the two major deities Taiyi and Houtu; the functions of all these cults were henceforth subsumed under one rubric.

Wang Mang disbanded all the imperial shrines in the commandery and kingdom administrative seats, even as he mandated that a much broader range of gods be worshipped at the capital sites. This is the chief reason why the Yuanshi Ceremonies should not be cast as the mere revival of proposals made earlier by Kuang Heng and his allies. Wang Mang did not merely move some imperial sacrifices to the suburban sites. He built the Grand Altar specifically for the worship of the entire imperial pantheon, constructing an extremely elaborate "altar to the myriad gods"; he also determined that all worship by the emperor would henceforth be centered at his capital at Chang'an. And though Wang Mang's Xin dynasty did not last very long, the blueprint for the Yuanshi Ceremonies that he adopted when regent became the template for the Eastern Han suburban sacrifices under Guangwu in 26 CE, at which not only Heaven and Earth but some 1,514 other gods were also worshipped at *one altar at the capital*.¹⁰⁶ This form of collective worship did not escape criticism, of course, in later ages. Yang Fu (fl. 1228 CE), to take one example, criticized the worship of more than a thousand gods at the altar near Luoyang.¹⁰⁷ Yang was one of many later ritual experts to find it bizarre (not to mention ritually wrong) to worship so many gods collectively. But clearly the elite experienced no difficulty approving these sorts of practices and beliefs when Wang Mang was the dominant figure at court, and also during Eastern Han.¹⁰⁸

Between Kuang Heng's reforms and the Yuanshi Ceremonies in 5 CE, a second sharp distinction emerges from the extant sources: Wang's explications were much more theoretically sophisticated than those advanced by Kuang Heng. And we must presume that Wang's reforms easily managed to supersede Kuang's. Moreover, while both men used the same slogan of "restoring antiquity," their notions of antiquity and their justifications for the restoration differed dramatically. Wang Mang's reforms were intended to consolidate and centralize the individual cults on an unprecedented scale, far surpassing the halting centralization in effect during the years 31–14 BCE. In making the capital with its four suburbs the sole center for the worship of nearly all the known gods, Wang in one initiative did away with many local cults that had been managed by local *fangshi* as technical experts in religious activities. And insofar as the Yuanshi Ceremonies were above all intended to centralize worship of the pantheon so as to further reduce the power of the localities, those ceremonies represented both a departure from Kuang Heng's vision and an extension or continuation of it. We can think of these 5 CE reforms as more consistent and more thorough than Kuang Heng's reforms, but at the time Wang's policies surely provoked strong reactions from many quarters inside the court, as well as in the localities, given the novelty of his vision and the sources he used to justify it.

Ban Biao, in discussing the Western Han reigns of Yuandi, Chengdi, and those that followed, remarked,

The Han house inherited their institutions from the Qin, which had cut off [classical] learning [from the pre-Qin period], and so the Han imperial ancestral sacrifices were modeled on those practices current at the time [of the Qin downfall]. From late Western Han on, the men of learning proliferated. Gong Yu wanted to demolish the imperial ancestral temples. Kuang Heng instituted the [new] suburban sacrifices. He Wu established the Three Lords. Numerous reform movements followed, too numerous to be regulated. Why was this? The texts or liturgies of the [real pre-Qin] rites had been lost, and two different systems, dubbed “new and old,” each had its own proponents, so that it was no easy matter to decide which was right and proper. When we examine all the arguments of the various men with classical learning, Liu Xin’s were most wide-ranging and trustworthy.¹⁰⁹

As Ban Biao explained, despite slogans about “reforms,” under Kuang Heng the Western Han imperial sacrifices simply proliferated, without ever being sorted out. But Wang Mang adopted Liu Xin’s “broad-ranging and trustworthy” proposals.¹¹⁰ The court classicists had lacked a workable method by which to determine which of the many pasts mentioned in the classics and masterworks was most correct. The decision first by Liu Xin and then by Wang Mang to resort to a new source, the *Rituals of Zhou*, was probably crucial to the successful resolution of at least some such controversies, even if Wang Mang cited the *Documents* in defense of the Yuanshi Ceremonies.

Clearly, the ritual spaces devised for the Yuanshi Ceremonies were radically unlike any spaces that preceded them. In the pre-imperial Qin state, no clear statements or precedents defined the ideal relation between the ruler and his ritual domain; this relation emerged gradually through the sacrifices the ruler made to the local powers at designated ritual sites. In the early imperial period, first under the short-lived Qin and then for nearly two centuries under Western Han, the emperors traveled far outside their capitals to sacrifice to the deities of the outlying lands throughout their domain. After 31 BCE, however, the emperor declined to travel far from the capital to worship the most important deities in the state sacrificial schedule (Map I.05b). That the state sacrifices came to be centered on the imperial person within his capital was itself a major change—a virtual “ritual revolution” of a magnitude unseen before this time, at least in the archaeological record. In effect, for the first time the entire weight of the sacrificial system was borne by the emperor’s ritual body,¹¹¹ with the correspondent downgrading and disestablishment of local temples and worship halls. This new vision was fully realized with Pingdi’s Yuanshi Ceremonies, in which the emperor worshipped Heaven as his immediate Father in liturgies that explicitly compared the emperor to a Son of Heaven, making the worship of Heaven a form of filial duty. (Only secondary duties were owed to the Mother correlated with Earth.)¹¹² As one classic said, “The true king is to serve Heaven as his Father.”¹¹³ The depersonalization of the emperor was

an important feature of these ceremonies, as was the amalgamation of the local gods through their detachment from their local origins.¹¹⁴

That the concentration of sacrificial space centered on the imperial capital represents a departure from Qin times and from virtually all of Western Han is possibly the single most important point to take away from this chapter. The old pre-imperial Qin state had a number of cult sites scattered across its domain. After Qin unification in 221 BCE, the famous cult sites of the old Six Kingdoms were incorporated into the Qin schedule of worship, as if they were simply part and parcel of the conquered states,¹¹⁵ whose appropriation redounded to the glory and sacred character of the newly unified empire.¹¹⁶ For Qin and most of Western Han, cult sites scattered across the land were added to the roster of imperial cults for any one of a variety of reasons: a portent seemed to be sent down from on high; an impressive *fangshi* urged it; or the Son of Heaven himself perceived something amiss or portentous. Han Wudi was the first to effect a major alteration to the old Qin system, in that he added the special cults to Taiyi and Houtu. The long-term trend in late Western Han was to concentrate ever more sacred space in or near the Western Han capital at Chang'an. Economic factors may have played a role in this trend, as well as the various emperors' personal preferences, also the gradual maturation of the administrative system for commanderies and counties.

As Kuang Heng noted, "in the past certain officials" (*you si*) had urged the throne to erect temples at whatever locations the former emperors had visited, the better to "tie" the throne to the hearts of the local people and "illustrate the merits of the former emperors."¹¹⁷ Thus the multiplication of imperial ancestral temples over the course of early to mid-Western Han was designed to strengthen center-periphery ties. Pingdi's Yuanshi Ceremonies—which can be read as a conscious reversal of the earlier trend to multiply cult sites—can with equal justice be viewed as a further extension of the process of centralization going on since before unification in 221 BCE.¹¹⁸ In any case, over time, emperors would travel less far from their capitals to commune with or serve the gods, preferring to commune with Heaven and Earth and the rest of the pantheon in their own suburbs.¹¹⁹ Essentially, the sacred character once invested in widely dispersed shrines and temples came to be resituated in the one imperial body, thereby effacing the old ties constructed between the local gods and the fate of the ruling house.¹²⁰ Once the single administrative capital of the Han empire became its chief religious center, the imperial sacrificial observances had fully shed the old practices associated with the royal worship of the pre-imperial period, introducing a new ritual model (albeit one claiming antique precedents) to serve as basis for the next two millennia in China.¹²¹ So the typical historian may depict late Western Han as an era of decadence and decline, but it beggars belief that major reforms like these could have been introduced had the Han court believed the dynasty's hold on the local regions to be relatively weak.¹²²

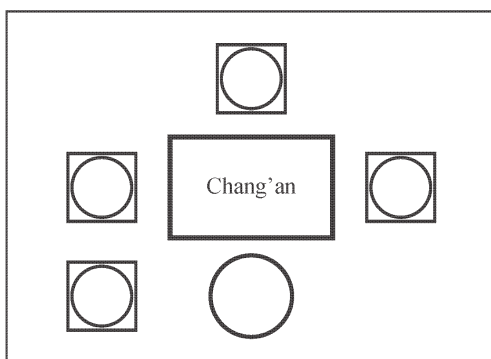


FIG. 10.02 Conceptual plan of the Yuanshi Ceremonies, 5 CE, showing the author's tentative reconstruction of the location of the six altars. There are two in the west, two in the south (depicted by one circle because their locations coincide), and one each in the north and east of the capital. Some other reconstructions have been proposed.

Conclusion

During the reform process in late Western Han, several conceptual layers were gradually constructed with respect to the suburban sacrifices, also the shift in ritual focus to Han Chang'an, which ultimately made the imperial capital the only important center for imperial cults.¹²³ The precise location of the Grand Altar in the south and the five secondary altars must await further archaeological research. But a preliminary conceptual map (Fig. 10.02; see also Map I.07) of the Yuanshi Ceremonies shows six altars: two in the west, two in the south (with the Grand Altar much larger), and one altar each in the north and east of the capital.¹²⁴

Li Ling has written more than once about the importance of local traditions to magical cults.¹²⁵ Certainly, during Qin and Western Han, curses and witchcraft were prevalent, especially in the “back palaces” (*hou gong*).¹²⁶ For most of Western Han, the two most important components of the imperial sacrifices were divided between the bureaucrats and the *fangshi*. These two parts, though logically separable, tended to be merged in practice in the Han official cults, as Gu Jiegang and others have shown.¹²⁷ High-ranking imperial officials did not necessarily associate often with the *fangshi*, but under imperial protection the cult sites tended by the *fangshi* certainly proliferated; and in all likelihood—but not certainly—the older cult sites were overseen by both *fangshi* and regular career bureaucrats. By late Western Han the prominent role of the *fangshi* in the imperial sacrifices began to be undermined. As the entire sacrificial order was recast, and the powers ascribed to each deity were reassigned, local practices associated with the *fangshi* were removed from the solemn imperial sacrifices managed by the Director of Prayers (Taizhu) and instead performed by the emperor on behalf of his entire realm; all the powerful local deities came to be worshipped at the Grand Altar in the southern suburbs.¹²⁸ That said, the gods once housed and fed in many of the disbanded local shrines were simply transferred to the Chang'an suburbs, for incorporation into the imperial worship program. Thus we have no evidence that would allow us to surmise that the Yuanshi Ceremonies somehow reduced the role of magic in the imperial sacrifices.

This chapter both builds upon and responds to many earlier works of scholarship. Western readers in particular will want to understand how it varies from other well-known treatments of the subject. As Michael Puett's analyses are based on a number of the prescriptions from the *Rites Record*, they fail to provide a sufficiently complex sense of changes over time (both theoretical and practical) at the late Western and Eastern Han courts.¹²⁹ Marianne Bujard has given an immensely learned and readable account of some of the changes catalogued here, but as she presupposes a sharp division between state and local cults that coincides with licit versus illicit, respectively,¹³⁰ her account fails to delineate certain features of the evolution in imperial sacrifices that this chapter emphasizes. Bujard believes that the main subjects of local cults were regional or subregional deities, so while the emperor and his representatives may have participated in worship ceremonies, those ceremonies remained the province of local cults devoted to local deities.

Of course, in the post-Han period, as is well known, many cults outside the capital (whether or not the Han emperors worshipped in them) were deemed "illicit," in large part because the imperial courts saw these local cults as challenges to their own supreme power and authority. By contrast, in Qin and Western Han, these cults in the outlying areas were sometimes supervised by the court, and sometimes not. In place of Bujard's conceptual division between state and local sacrifices, this chapter therefore posits a tripartite division for most of Western Han: (1) the imperial cults for the realm and the ruling line; (2) the local nobles' (and later, the local officials') cults in the regions and locales; and (3) the people's (*minjian*) cults, where types 2 and 3 had no *regular* participation by the emperor. Also in contrast to most modern scholarship, this chapter has depicted the late Western Han reforms in general and the 5 CE Yuanshi Ceremonies in particular as a dramatic break from earlier precedents.¹³¹

Notes

- 1 The Eight Divine Hosts, probably a late Zhanguo cult, worshipped Heaven, Earth, Sun, Moon, Chiyao (the God of War), the Four Seasons, and yin and yang. See n. 29.
- 2 For an important study of the Chen Bao sacrifices, see Bujard 1998.
- 3 Note that other gods besides Taiyi were worshipped at the Grand Altar, or Tai Zhi. Nor was it first under Wudi that the shrines at Sweet Springs and Fenyin were established. Still, Wudi seems to have substantially expanded the worship activities at those two sites.
- 4 Use of the term "suburban sacrifices" is standard. But it does not signify sacrifices at less important sites; rather, these sites were considered especially numinous but outside the capital perimeter walls. "Services at the bounds" would be meaningful, as Loewe points out (personal communication, 2013).
- 5 See Chen Suzhen 2001, 315–98.
- 6 For example, Loewe 1974; Gan 2008a, 2008b; Kaneko 2006, 123–219.
- 7 Bujard 2009, 208.
- 8 *Shiji* 28.1377. The highest official responsible for sacrifices was initially called the Taizhu (Director of Prayers), but the name of that office changed a few times; see *Hanshu* 19A.726. Of course

many cults were truly local, in that they never formed part of the imperial sacrificial schedule. Some of these truly local cults were organized and supported by local officials, with the result that occasionally an emperor himself would participate in them. This did not change the fact that they did not form part of the imperial sacrifices. These truly local cults are not the subject of this chapter, which even as it acknowledges profound debts to previous scholarship, seeks to move the conversation away from the anachronistic dichotomies of state versus local and licit versus illicit, the better to avoid imposing post-Western Han views on Western Han phenomena.

- 9 Bujard 2009 devotes no separate section to Wang Mang; also, on pp. 795–96, Bujard seems to assume that the *ru* were, from the start, working toward an “ideal plan” “to place in the imperial pantheon a supreme divinity dominating all others.”
- 10 Ban Gu provides his version of this perfect state of ritual during early Western Zhou when “illicit cults were banned” (*yinsi you jin*). See *Hanshu* 25A.1195.
- 11 I am indebted to Ma Baochun (Capital Normal University) and Li Ling (Peking University) for this image.
- 12 *Shiji* 6.241.
- 13 *Shiji* 6.242–48. Also see Lewis 1999, 50–80.
- 14 *Shiji* 28.1367, 6.248.
- 15 *Shiji* 29.1365.
- 16 This is all the same tour of 219 BCE, but I say “made a detour” via Pengcheng, as Qin Shihuang did not go straight to the south. See *Shiji* 6.284.
- 17 Geertz 1983, 125–48, discusses royal progresses and their rationales.
- 18 *Shiji* 6.239.
- 19 See Yang Kuan 1985, 193.
- 20 NB: The Epang Palace was never finished (despite some legendary “reconstructions” of it), presumably because the First Emperor died unexpectedly early. Archaeologists say only that the pounded earth (*hangtu*) foundations were completed at the site (not the palace complex itself).
- 21 On this, consult Li Lingfu 2009, 26–29, which says, “Supposedly the many palaces across the Wei River (on the north) were like the Milky Way and its many stars. The North Pole is to the north of the Milky Way, just as the Xianyang Palace was north of the Wei River.” Li speculates that the First Emperor “set up a cult to himself as a living god.”
- 22 *Shiji* 6.256.
- 23 *Shiji* 28.1374.
- 24 *Shiji* 28.1377.
- 25 The city of Yong, located in the western part of Guanzhong (the “area within the passes”), in the plain north of the Wei River, was located at a major communications hub and strategic point linking Guanzhong to the Hexi Corridor. See *Shiji* 5.188. Yong served as the burial site for the kings in the ruling Qin line prior to the move of the capital to Xianyang. See Han and Jiao 1988, 118.
- 26 *Shiji* 6.227.
- 27 *Shiji* 28.1376–77. See also Bujard 1998, 131–81.
- 28 The one trip the emperor made to the far south, which seems the one exception to this larger picture, does not greatly change our impression of Wudi’s preoccupations with the east and northwest of his realm.
- 29 As to the Eight Divine Hosts: The eight major cults were in the pre-unification state of Qi, and they included Heaven, Earth, the Military (soldiers or weapons?), Yin, Yang, the Sun, the Moon, and the Four Seasons, all brought together in a relatively tight conceptual scheme. However, the spatial distribution was not so strict. They can be roughly divided into two groups: the Lords of Heaven and Earth, and the Military, whose sites were at Taishan, facing west; and the

other five, whose cult sites ranged along both coasts of the Shandong Peninsula, at places relatively distant from one another. In the mid- to late Chunqiu period, Qi's power did not reach the eastern half of the peninsula, and the entire Shandong Peninsula belonged to Donglai, which probably presented a firm barrier for advocates who wanted to worship these deities in a single sacrificial system. By late Chunqiu, however, the eastern half of Shandong Peninsula had come within Qi's sphere of influence. The first penetration of Qi into the Shandong Peninsula dates to late Chunqiu; into Taishan, to late Zhanguo. That is why some scholars believe that the Eight Divine Hosts are a late Zhanguo phenomenon. See Zhou Zhenhe 1987, 64–65.

- 30 Maspero, in his works on Taoism, suggested the translation of Devotional Hall, and this is probably correct, but I use the standard translation here.
- 31 See *Hanshu* 6.196, 204.
- 32 See Eliade 1954, 27–34.
- 33 *Shiji* 6.241–42.
- 34 *Shiji* 110.2901.
- 35 *Hanshu* 6.195.
- 36 In 108 BCE, the line of defense was extended along the Gansu Corridor up to the Jade Gate Barrier, establishing the four northwestern commanderies. In 102 BCE, the agricultural garrisons were built north of the defenses along the Shiyang and Ruoshui Rivers, settling the Juyan and Xiutu oases.
- 37 *Shiji* 25B.1265.
- 38 *Shiji* 28.1386.
- 39 See *Shiji* 28.1380, for Wendi, and 28.1387, for Wudi, and the assertion that by 122 BCE the Five Marchmounts (Wu Yue, referring to the Five Major Mountains) were located in centrally administered commanderies.
- 40 Nagata 2008, 223–43; Chen Suzhen 2004, 27–40.
- 41 Nagata 2008, 243.
- 42 Here I am implicitly arguing against the many historians who believe that the collapse of Western Han governmental strength in the commanderies and kingdoms had already started by late Western Han. Wang Aiqing 2010 and Du Qingyu 2010 take this for granted, as does much of the recent work by Hsing I-tien, Wang Zijin, and Lai Ming Chiu.
- 43 *Hanshu* 25B.1254.
- 44 *Hanshu* 25B.1248.
- 45 See Poo 1998, 103–22.
- 46 This, however, does not mean that before Yuandi's reign there was no consciousness of a contradiction between the imperial desires for personal welfare (the avowed goal of the *fangshi* activities) and desires for the well-being of the entire body politic. One excellent example noting the contradiction appears in the *Yantie lun*, where the *xianlang*'s attack on the *fangshi* occurs within the context of discussions on sage rulership. See below, as well as *Yantie lun*, *juan* 5, *pian* 28, 333–34; *juan* 8, *pian* 46, 500.
- 47 *Hanshu* 25B.1260–61.
- 48 According to Li Ling, the main occupations of the *fangshi* in Eastern Han were computing calendrical cycles, dealing with the apocryphal and occult, divination by *fengjiao* and other methods, dietetics, exercises, and subjects having to do with long life or immortality. See Li Ling 2001, 118–26.
- 49 *Hanshu* 10.304–6. See n. 28 above for the one exception to this general picture.
- 50 *Hanshu* 25B.1253–54.
- 51 *Hanshu* 25B.1253–54. Cf. *Liji zhushu* 22/12b, p. 1425, which says that in antiquity the emperor performed the suburban sacrifice to Heaven. Since the *Liji* was compiled around this time, that reference is especially important.

- 52 *Hanshu* 25B.1254.
- 53 *Hanshu* 75.3167, 3178.
- 54 *Hanshu* 88.3613. The Taiwanese scholar Gan Huaizhen already has shown the importance of Hou Cang, especially making the point that Hou Cang's teachings had become "official learning" by Chengdi's era. Hou Cang followed the ritual teachings of Meng Xi, who was also an expert in the *Annals*, and both Meng's and Hou's work was eventually championed by the formal apparatus of the imperial academy. Hou Cang was teacher of Xiahou Shichang, an expert in the rites and the *Odes* who became an Academician. Xiahou was the teacher of Kuang Heng, Yi Feng, and Xiao Wangzhi (in other words, all the main reformers in the 30s BCE). However, it is worth pursuing the question, not of Hou Cang's influence in late Western Han (which is certain), but of the relation between Hou Cang's original teachings and whatever was made "official learning" at the Han court. What I would stress at this point is that Hou Cang's teachings somehow "elevated" the tone of ritual discourse in late Western Han (see below).
- 55 *Hanshu* 86.3503. Shi Dan was appointed Academician under Yuandi, dismissed, and then reappointed under Chengdi. His views were often sought by the Chancellor Zhai Fangjin and by Kuang Heng (then Imperial Counsellor). Eventually, he was given ministerial rank.
- 56 Xiao's family name is written as 肖 in an excavated document. See *Wenwu* 12, no. 5 (1995): 38.
- 57 See Gan Huaizhen 2008b, 66, who says that this not only put into practice a group of earlier ideas but also represented a new attempt to make the ritual reforms the center of government practices.
- 58 See *Hanshu* 58.2630. Also see Watanabe 2008, 84.
- 59 *Hanshu* 25B.1254.
- 60 This Wang Shang is listed as Wang Shang (1) in the Loewe's *Biographical Dictionary* (p. 548). This is not Wang Shang (2), uncle of Wang Mang, who eventually (15–12 BCE) succeeded after Wang Feng and Wang Yin to the position of Marshal of State (Da Sima), signifying his position as head of not only the Wang consort clan but also all the emperor's maternal relatives. Wang Shang (2), who was known for his opulent household, was first made Noble of the Interior in 32 BCE.
- 61 *Hanshu* 25B.1256.
- 62 *Hanshu* 22.1057–58.
- 63 Nylan 2011a dubs this the *hao gu* (antiquity-loving) movement.
- 64 *Hanshu* 25B.1257, 10.305.
- 65 We can divide this next spurt of activity into two phases. In the first phase of 30–29 BCE, according to the "Treatise on the Suburban Sacrifices," Kuang Heng and Zhang Tan abolished the cults. The second phase saw the establishment of sacrifices in the suburbs, plus the abolition of the cults at Yong, Fenyin, and Ganquan. We do not know the precise date of the abolition of those worship sites, but it should have been *before* Kuang Heng's dismissal from office in 30 or 29 BCE and Zhang Tan's dismissal in 30 BCE.
- 66 *Hanshu* 25B.1257.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Only fifteen of the sacrifices at Yong (all of which were to be preserved) were associated with the great mountains, rivers, and asterisms, and all of these were supposedly attested in the ritual texts.
- 69 The Chinese text says little else than this. *Shiji* 28.1375 identifies the Du Host as a leading general of the Zhou dynasty.
- 70 *Hanshu* 25B.1257–58.
- 71 Little is known of Hou Cang, aside from that given in *Biographical Dictionary*, 157. Hou held the post of Academician and is often described as the most impressive of the ritual masters at Xuandi's court. A record of his explications of various rituals offered to Xuandi was supposedly preserved in the *Qutai ji*.

- 72 Nonetheless, *Hanshu* 73.3130 charges Yuandi with “acting contrary to the system of ritual precedents” (*wei yu lizhi*) that he had inherited.
- 73 *Hanshu* 9.298.
- 74 *Hanshu* 10.302.
- 75 *Hanshu* 25B.1258.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 *Hanshu* 10.322.
- 79 From the time when Chengdi restored the early Western Han sacrificial schedule (14 BCE), he carried out major sacrifices every single year throughout his reign, with one sacrifice to Taiyi and Houtu in one year and one to the Five Altars at Yong the next. See *Hanshu* 10.323–24. His sacrificial schedule was such that even Wudi could not surpass him. The accelerated pace of sacrifices from 14 BCE on was quite unusual in Western Han, making it appear that Chengdi was trying somehow to “make up” for the “missed” sacrifices he had failed to carry out, so as to curry favor belatedly with the gods. This certainly looks like a good example of an emperor seeking his own personal welfare.
- 80 *Hanshu* 73.3120. When Yuandi and his younger brother, soon after these ancestral temple reforms were introduced on Kuang Heng’s advice, were visited by nightmares in which the gods berated the ruling line for those reforms, Yuandi was set to reverse himself on the temple reforms, but Kuang Heng would not relent.
- 81 *Hanshu* 73.3121–24.
- 82 *Hanshu* 81.3344, 36.1966.
- 83 Liu Xiang held the ministerial position of Zongzheng during the years 48–47 BCE, which office was to enforce imperial clan precedents.
- 84 *Hanshu* 81.3344.
- 85 *Hanshu* 36.1932.
- 86 The Chen Tang incident shows that many among those who “recited the classics” differed in their policy proposals toward the Xiongnu situation. See, for example, *Hanshu* 70.3007, 75.3192; Loewe 1974, 240.
- 87 *Hanshu* 70.3015–16.
- 88 *Hanshu* 36.1958, 70.3017–18. Xu Xingwu thought that Liu Xiang’s opposition to Kuang Heng had something to do with their postings as Courtiers and as classicists who had undergone training from the court Academicians. See Xu Xingwu 2005, 144–45. These divisions do not map neatly onto Loewe’s division between modernists and reformers. Loewe assumed in his classic work, *Crisis and Conflict in Han China* (1974), that the late Western Han ritual reformers were involved with the Guwen (Archaic Script) group, but that is hard to prove, based on present evidence, and may not be correct. Obviously enough, the reformers Liu Xin and Wang Mang were preoccupied with Guwen, but when we look at the entire group of reformers throughout the process of reform, justification for the reforms clearly came from the two kinds of texts we now call Modern Script and Archaic Script.
- 89 *Hanshu* 81.3388.
- 90 *Hanshu* 25B.1264.
- 91 *Hanshu* 25B.1259.
- 92 Ibid. However, what he did then was appoint a representative who would worship on behalf of the emperor at these cult sites.
- 93 We may speculate whether this means Wang Mang did not want Aidi to derive the benefit from his ritual activities.
- 94 *Hanshu* 25B.1264.
- 95 *Hanshu* 11.341.

- 96 *Hanshu* 10.330, 11.341.
- 97 *Hanshu* 25B.1266.
- 98 *Hanshu* 25B.1265–66.
- 99 *Zhouli zhushu* 22/9a–11b.
- 100 *Zhouli zhushu* 18/1a–4a.
- 101 *Hanshu* 25B.1267–68. This identification between the “six sons” of the *Yijing* and the Liu Zong mentioned in the *Documents* ultimately came from Wang Mang’s old supporter, Liu Xin, and his *Yijing* exegesis. But see n. 100 below.
- 102 The subcommentary to the “Yao dian” chapter of the *Documents* classic says that Kong Guang and Liu Xin had this idea about the Liu Zong. See *Shangshu zhushu* 3/5a–6b; and Liu Shao’s commentary to the *Hou Hanshu*, “Treatise on Sacrifices, zhong” (*Hou Hanshu*, zhi 8.3184–87). The important proof that Wang Mang borrowed from Liu Xin comes from the fact that Wang wanted these suburban sacrifices to take place on specific days of the calendar.
- 103 *Hanshu* 25B.1268.
- 104 See below. Tentatively, we assume two altars in the west of roughly the same size, and two in the south (where one altar, the Grand Altar, was much larger than the other), and two secondary altars in both the north and east of the capital.
- 105 From Wudi’s time on, there had been Five Altars at Yong as well.
- 106 See *Hou Hanshu*, “Treatise on Sacrifice, shang” zhi 7.3159–60.
- 107 Yang’s comment is recorded in Qin Huitian, *Wuli tongkao* (1761), *juan* 3.3, in e-SKQS.
- 108 Even in Eastern Han, court officials might still participate in local cults, such as the cult of the Six Famous Mountains in Yuanshi county. However, since they operated independently from the Director of Prayers, the highest official responsible for the imperial sacrifices, by definition, those cultic activities do not qualify as “imperial cults.” See Tian Tian 2011.
- 109 *Hanshu* 73.3130–31. The character *du* also means “sincere, pious,” and so it might refer here to Liu Xin’s pious decision to preserve sacrifices to all members of the pantheon.
- 110 However, we should note that the definition of the Liu Zong continued to be debated, as seen in Xu Shen’s *Wujing yiyi* and Zheng Xuan’s *Bo Wujing yiyi*. See *Wujing yiyi shuzheng* 2012 and *Bo Wujing yiyi shuzheng* 2002.
- 111 Kantorowicz 1997.
- 112 Regarding the “five moves or changes in thirty years” mentioned in n. 97, most Japanese scholars argue that Wang Mang followed the *Classic of Filial Piety* text when he singled out Heaven for honor, and they believe that Wang’s suburban sacrifices were designed to illustrate the emperor’s position as the supreme exemplar of filial piety on Earth, a position correlating with Heaven’s position as the supreme ruler of the cosmos; see, for example, Itano 1972, esp. 556, writing on Western Han reforms. Certainly, the Yuanshi Ceremonies during Pingdi’s reign emphasized the sacrifices to the Han founder and his empress. Nonetheless, whether Wang Mang as regent had any personal interest in such sacrifices stemming from his desire to exemplify filial piety remains an open question. Were the Japanese scholars correct in their suppositions, we would expect the suburban sacrifices to include a significant component devoted to ancestral worship, but they did not. Therefore, quite possibly the decision to institute the suburban sacrifices was prompted not by one single motive but rather by a complex of motives.
- 113 *Hanshu* 25B.1264, citing the *Xiaojing*, sec. 9.
- 114 This was an extremely long process of development. See Gan Huaizhen 2008, 135–37. Li Ling has written more than once about the importance of local traditions to magical cults. See, for example, Li Ling 2000, 131; and Li Lingfu 2009. However, by late Western Han, the prominent role of the *fangshi* in the imperial sacrifices began to be undermined; a fairly consistent trend, from Kuang Heng to Wang Mang, was to diminish or even disestablish the shrines associated with local magicians and cult masters. As the entire sacrificial order was being recast, and

the powers ascribed to each deity were reassigned, local practices associated with the *fang-shi* were removed. Still, we have no firm evidence for saying that the Yuanshi Ceremonies actually reduced the role of magic in the imperial sacrifices. As the Japanese scholar Watanabe Shinichirō, in his 2008 work, has pointed out, many imperial rituals before Hou Cang were preoccupied with magical practices and with bodily cultivation (for health and immortality). See n. 54. This was also true after Hou Cang.

- 115 Possible parallel: building of the miniature palaces in the style of each capital in the Six Kingdoms at Xianyang.
- 116 Itō 1993, 49.
- 117 *Hanshu* 73:3121 recounts the following circumstances: Yuandi had a dream in which the former emperors chided him for dismantling the ancestral temples, which belonged to the imperial cults. Kuang Heng said it was impossible to restore the temples, due to the expense, especially in a year when there had been great famines. Thus Kuang Heng vigorously opposed his emperor on this issue. See *ibid.*, 3129, for more on Liu Xin's views on sacrifices.
- 118 See Bujard 2009, 777. Puett 2009, 714, however, takes the opposite view, that the implication of such a ritual system is that the ruler would thus remain in the capital, and the state would not attempt to control the local cults. In other words, the imperial system in which the empire would directly control all land would be dissolved, and the state would return to the more restricted form of statecraft associated with the Zhou.
- 119 However, "centralizing processes" can take many forms (as they did under Wudi versus Wang Mang). Wang's reforms, in shrinking the imperial sacrificial space, did not simply transfer local deities and their cults to the capital; instead, Wang Mang's reforms replaced the old set of practices with an unprecedentedly systematized set of practices, which intentionally or coincidentally deprived the local communities of imperial support for the maintenance of local cults.
- 120 Besides the cults mentioned in connection with the capital reforms, the Han ruling line and its court still ordered the construction of many temples and worship halls, for example, temples to Kongzi (Confucius) in the commanderies and kingdoms.
- 121 For the reformers in Wang Mang's circle, "restore antiquity" meant "restore the [forms of] rule of the Duke of Zhou." These would be the points shared among the reformers portrayed in the *Yantie lun* (a set of characters devised for a literary exercise reflecting the views of Yuandi's reign, if Loewe is correct) and the reformers in Wang Mang's actual circle. As Chen Suzhen and I see it, at both the salt and iron debates (in 81 BCE) and the Shiqu Pavilion debates (in 51 BCE), the young *wenxue* reformers articulated a number of ideas, including the necessity of changing the content and thrust of government policies, making *jiaohua* (the dynasty's own "civilizing mission") more important than Wudi's expansionist policies; doing away with the policies associated with "tyrannical" Qin; and articulating a new vision of "true kingship" (as opposed to hegemonic rule), which they modeled on legends about the Duke of Zhou. Eventually, as these younger men moved up through the official ranks, their once-radical talk became more mainstream, so that by the reigns of Xuandi and Yuandi (and certainly Chengdi), this discourse appeared in many memorials submitted to the throne. See Chen Suzhen 2001, 307–28.

Still, it would be dangerous to conflate the semifictional characters of the *Yantie lun* with the real reformers during late Western Han. The real-life reformers had a more expansive notion of change than the *Yantie lun* suggests, as is clear from Gu Yong's memorial translated elsewhere in this volume. Palace expenditures (especially in the women's quarters) were to be reduced; less of the imperial purse was to be spent on the entertainment of guests and diplomats (foreign and domestic); and changes in the burial practices were advocated. Whether the reformers' chief goal was to put constraints on the emperor, confining him in the capital (as Bujard 2000 alleges) cannot be confirmed or denied, given the paucity of evidence.

- 122 For other scholars' presumption that the power of the Western Han government had greatly

- declined by late Western Han, see n. 42 above. By contrast, this chapter argues that the Han court's eagerness to debate such important matters in purely theoretical terms suggests that it felt no strong threats from the localities at this point (which is not to say that local rebellions could not quickly arise in response to a perceived loosening of control by the center).
- 123 *Zhouli zhushu* 19/1a.
- 124 See Figure 10.01. This plan follows the *Zhouli* prescriptions but varies somewhat from the plan given by Xi'an archaeologists in *Xi Han lizhi jianzhu yizhi* 2003, 210, which assumes altars of the same size. We must wait patiently for further research to decide which type of layout is more accurate. Figure 6, p. 1, in the *Xi Han lizhi jianzhu yizhi* only shows the suburban main altar in the south. Wu Hung 1995, map 3.7, p. 171, labels the main altar the "Mingtang," but the Ming Tang is, to quote the eminent French scholar Michèle Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, a *paté de choux*, a construction full of hot air (personal communication, August 2010).
- 125 Li Ling 2000, 131.
- 126 *Hanshu* 72.3067, 79.3307, 97A.3948. Editors' note: Although one wonders whether these charges were trumped up by opponents of certain consort families.
- 127 Gu Jiegang 1935.
- 128 See n. 58 above, for the views of the Japanese scholar Watanabe Shinichirō.
- 129 The fundamental flaw in Puett's work of 2002 and 2009 is to assume, on an extrapolation from the *Liji*, that Heaven resides always in the imperial capital during the four centuries of Han. Puett also argues that the Han emperors end by thinking they need not "seek the spirits" (*qiu shen*), as they are principally engaged in self-cultivation to gain Heaven's approval. Cf. Baker 2006. I grant that the *Liji* text *became* important over time but argue that it did not affect discussions at court for most of Western Han. This chapter does not mention Kenneth Brashier's work, as it focuses on ancestral temples (quite another subject).
- 130 Many local sacrifices could be approved by the court, with their worship ceremonies performed by relatively high-ranking representatives of the emperor (e.g., the *gong she*, the *la* festival, worship of the First Agriculturalist). But so long as these sacrifices were not managed by the Director of Prayers in the capital, and the fees, expenses, and participants were under the purview of local officials (not the central court), this chapter does not describe them as "imperial sacrifices." Unfortunately, little research has been done to date on the question of how local officials managed the local sacrifices. Note, too, that Bodde 1975 discusses the history of these cults, but mainly for Eastern Han, when the emperor took these cults over and participated in them (a situation that did not pertain for most of Western Han). I have described the reassignment of the Six Famous Mountains (to take one example) away from the counties. This cult originally had no connection with the court's sacrifices under the Director of Prayers; instead, local members of the bureaucracy participated in the ceremonies and funded them. See Tian Tian 2011.
- 131 For example, I completely agree with Bujard's contention that the Tai Zhi and Taishan altars were modeled on those already at Yong. Moreover, Bujard's work points out that there were three major cult sites during the reign of Han Wudi (Yong, Taiyi, and Taishan), a conclusion with which I concur.

Calendrical Computation Numbers and Han Dynasty Politics

A STUDY OF GU YONG'S THREE TROUBLES THEORY

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(translated by Luke Habberstad 何祿凱)

A CONCEPT OF CYCLICAL HISTORY EMERGED EARLY IN CHINA, AS PART OF the larger notion of cosmic resonance between Heaven and human beings. The pre-Han concept held that history, like nature, was characterized by cycles, each proceeding from florescence to decline within a set period of time. Theories such as “every five hundred years will see a true king arise”¹ and the “Five Powers cycle” are both examples. By late Western Han, this idea of cyclical history, interpreted via the prevailing calendrical methods (*li fa*), had developed into several theories about cycles in relation to calendrical computation numbers (*li shu*), also called calendrical cycles (*li yun*).

According to the new theories, natural disasters and omens would typically occur at the transition between two turns of the cycle, or at critical junctures in the yin-yang cycle, when one set of calendrical cycle numbers was due to end. Such disasters purportedly included “ominous events at the junctions” (*ji hui zhi e*) and “Nine [i.e., Extreme] Yang in the 106th Year” (Yang Jiu Bai Liu, hereafter Nine Yang),² with all disasters that were deemed portentous eliciting proposals to change government institutions and urging a new beginning. Various theories identified an urgent need for change, particularly those calling for a “renewal” of the Mandate and for a Great Peace, or Restoration (Geng Shi). The Three Troubles (San Nan) theory, advanced by Gu Yong

(d. 8 BCE) at the court of Chengdi, is a useful starting point for studying the larger theory of calendrical computations, particularly in relation to theories of natural disasters and portents. Understanding this one type of “reckoning art” or “mathematical technique” (*shu shu*) will greatly advance our understanding of the political influences of these theories in Han times.

During Western and Eastern Han, the single term “calendrical computations” (*li shu*) connoted two distinct phenomena: first, the precise numbers employed in calculating the calendar, insofar as advisers at court deemed the regularity or irregularity of ominous events (especially solar and lunar eclipses, floods, and droughts) to be significant proof, not only of the effectiveness of those calendars, but also of various policy measures;³ and second, the Mandate, as conferred by Heaven upon individual rulers and as a determinant of the length of the dynasty’s existence. For example, some took the twelve ducal reigns recorded in the *Chunqiu* (*Annals*), ascribed to Kongzi (Confucius), to mean that the Han dynasty would last only twelve generations.⁴ To possess the proper computation numbers was tantamount to knowing who possessed Heaven’s Mandate or, sometimes, even possessing the Mandate itself.⁵ Therefore, a perceived need to demonstrate that the ruling house still possessed the Mandate lay behind proposals either to assign a new month as the first month in the lunar calendar or to institute an entirely new calendrical system; after all, the size of the calendrical computation numbers was thought to be a good indicator of the duration of the ruling house itself. Theories regarding the succession of emperors within a dynasty and the length of the dynastic life span—namely, those theories categorized either as cycle periods (*yun qi*) or period cycles (*qi yun*)—were also significant features of calendrical computation numbers.

Because the calendar symbolizes the natural motions of the cosmos, which tend to be cyclical and regular, people thought that societal disasters and dynastic upheavals or changes in successions, and even history itself, likewise operated on regular cycles. At critical junctures in the calendar, ominous events would occur independent of human actions; in this sense they differed from the natural disasters and anomalies (*zaiyi*) brought about by wrongdoing and usually blamed upon a ruler’s misrule. As Wang Chong (27–97 CE) pointed out, even the ideal reigns of the sage-rulers Yao and Tang witnessed floods and droughts due to the stages reached in the cosmic cycle, rather than to ordinary misrule.⁶ Everyone is aware of the political influence of Yin-Yang Five Phases theory in late Western Han, but scholars have devoted far greater attention to theories about unethical behavior causing disasters and anomalies than to theories about disasters and omens owed to calendrical numbers and cycles. This chapter addresses that gap in the secondary literature.

Cycle Periods: Transforming the Theories of Five Hundred Years and Five Powers into Calendrical Regularities

Already in the pre-imperial period, there existed cyclical views of history, two important instances being Mencius's saying that "every five hundred years will see a true king arise" and Zou Yan's Five Powers cycle. By Western Han (202 BCE–9 CE), these two theories, in combination with various calendrical methods, had become one part of the calendrical computations.

The prediction that "every five hundred years will see a true king arise" was still cited often during Western Han,⁷ but within the context of calendrical methods and theories about calendrical computations. As the historian Sima Qian (145?–86? BCE) wrote, a 500-year cycle constituted one great change (*da bian*), and three such cycles made up one epoch (*ji*).⁸ Thus, one epoch, by Sima Qian's reckoning, was 1,500 years long, a figure quite close to the 1,520-year-long epoch stipulated for the Quarter Remainder (Si Fen) calendar in use in Qin and in early Western Han. Three epochs, as we will see, made one Grand Completion cycle. Moreover, the sum for three epochs (4,560 years) was precisely equal to the calendrical sum given for the Origin (Yuan) assigned within the Quarter Remainder system.⁹ Apocryphal texts¹⁰ meanwhile spoke of "Yao's five hundred years"¹¹ being combined with the heavenly figure (*tian shu*) of 4,560 years.¹² These basic calendrical computations eventually became the stuff of predictive numerology and the basis for the major calendrical computations about omens.

The pre-Qin Five Powers cycle theory specified no predefined length for a given cycle. By Western Han, however, the cycle for each Power (De) was supposedly 304 years long,¹³ so that one complete turn of the Five Powers cycle equaled 1,520 years, a figure that not coincidentally tallied with the duration of one calendrical epoch in Quarter Remainder calendrics. This Han theory allotting 304 years to each of the Five Powers in the cycle later became the basis for Zhangdi's (r. 75–88 CE) restoration of the Quarter Remainder astronomical system, as well as for the 133 CE proposal submitted by Lang Yi to Shundi (r. 125–144 CE) urging a change in the date of the "Origin" and further restoration of the Quarter Remainder calendar.¹⁴ This theory's influence in policy discussions thereafter is clear. Theories describing the cycles by which sages received the Mandate to rule circulated in apocryphal texts from late Western Han onward. Various apocryphal texts given titles such as *Hetu lu yun fa* (*Cyclical Patterns Recorded in the Yellow River Chart*), *Shangshu yun qi shou* (*Cycle Periods of the Documents*), and *Chunqiu Zuozhu qi* (*Cycles in Service to the Annals*) all attest the tremendous influence accorded these sorts of theories. In such apocryphal texts, the theories about cycle periods or period cycles all combined the calendrical base numbers assigned the Five Powers in complex calendrical computations.¹⁵

Western Han thinkers did not merely continue using concepts from the pre-Qin era; they developed many new theories about the calendrical cycles. The 46 BCE memorial by Yuandi's official Yi Feng (fl. 48 BCE), and the 12 BCE memorial by Chengdi's official Gu Yong (translated below) provide us with some evidence about these new Western

Han theories. Yi Feng's memorial discussed the complex associations relating cyclical theories of history with the calendar, and his views which drew upon three distinct interpretative traditions for the classics: the traditions from the *Yi* (*Changes*) regarding the cyclical nature of yin-yang; the Five Junctures (Wu Ji) traditions devised for the *Shi* (*Odes*); and the *Annals*' traditions on the subject of disasters and anomalies.¹⁶ Gu Yong, in response to a formal inquiry by his emperor, Chengdi, devised or transmitted (we cannot know which) a particularly noteworthy formulation, which made two explicit claims: first, that dynastic change was a cosmic constant; and second, that fixed cycles mandated the florescence and decline of dynasties, despite any merits that might accrue to particular reigns. Thus the cosmic order predetermined the course of dynastic cycles and the precise dates when individual successions to the throne would take place, so that actions by the emperor or his court could not extend or shorten the allotted length of the time spans.

By Chengdi's reign, as Gu Yong noted, the dynasty had already seen nine emperors. As nine (3×3) was the highest figure associated with auspicious yang (which, by *Changes* theories, meant that yang would shortly convert to the more inauspicious yin), Chengdi could expect his own tenure to witness the convergence of three types of natural disasters (the so-called Three Troubles); Gu believed that these three types, though categorically different, were due to converge in time (*San Nan yi ke, za yan tong hui*) and so become triply dangerous. Gu argued that the Three Troubles were predicted by no fewer than three separate omen theories: the Conjunction of Three Times Seven (*San Qi Zhi Jie Ji*) theory; the Hexagram Cycle at Wuwang (*Wuwang Zhi Gua Yun*) theory; and the Disasters in the 106th Year (*Bai Liu Zhi Zai E*) theory.¹⁷ The first of the three categories of natural disasters related to the Five Junctures theory employed in the *Odes* interpretations, as mentioned by Yi Feng; the second two related to yin-yang theories discussed in the *Changes* interpretations. Let us turn to examine Gu Yong's 12 BCE memorial in full, which demonstrates Gu's thinking, his style of argumentation, and the surprisingly forthright tone adopted in late Western Han memorials that remonstrated against the throne.¹⁸

Gu Yong's Memorial

Your servant Yong was fortunate enough to be able to use his paltry talents to become Grand Counsellor of the Palace, a rank in which he filled out the aggregate of officials advising the emperor.¹⁹ From the time of this court appointment, I have in no way adequately fulfilled my debt of loyalty, nor have I helped to propagate the imperial virtues of the Sage Ruler. And since my demotion, there has been no occasion to don armor and harry the unrighteous, sharp weapons in hand. That a lowly person such as myself has received ample expressions of imperial favor, so that I have been promoted to my present position as Governor of Beidi, [means that] it would hardly suffice to repay the myriad blessings I have enjoyed were I to perform my solemn duty [even unto death,

allowing] my physical person to fertilize the wild grasses [on the battlefield].

Your Majesty, with his Sagely virtues, generosity, and compassion, has not neglected my insignificant service. Like King Wen of Zhou, you incline an ear to the most benighted of the grass- and fodder-gatherers.²⁰ In an edict, you commanded that the Commissioner of the Guards transcribe whatever I, your servant Yong, would like to say. I have heard it said of the duty owed while in service to one's lord that those who would berate the ruler [for his faults] are those who give full expression to their loyalty. Thus do officeholders fulfill the duties pertaining to their positions. Your servant Yong feels fortunate to have escaped blame for the crime of criticizing the imperial person and to have been given the responsibilities of Governor. It is fitting that he exert every effort to honor his post and that he nourish the common people and make them secure—attending to those duties and nothing else. He ought not to close the door on talk of success and failure. For a loyal official's relation to his ruler commits him to doing far more than is required. For this reason, however distant he may be [from the capital], he will not offend his ruler; nor in death will he forget his ruling house.

Long ago, when the Diviner²¹ Yu was on the point of death, his loyalty had not yet been fully exhausted, so he asked that his coffin be placed in the back chambers of the palace, whence his corpse might speak truth to power.²² And with [the exemplary official] Ji An [d. after 118 BCE], even when he was not employed at court, his thoughts remained inside. Very agitated and seeking a way to express his cares and concerns, Ji left his testament for Li Xi.²³ As the *Documents* classic says, "Even though your person be outside [i.e., away from the capital], let your thoughts be always with the royal house."²⁴ Your servant Yong was fortunate enough to be able to serve in the palace for some three years altogether. Even though today I grasp my shield and lance in order to defend the borders, my heart, which longs for you, is always fixed on the administration. This is why I now dare to overstep my jurisdiction, in order to set forth the worries I have had for several years.

I have heard that "Heaven gives birth to the teeming masses."²⁵ As they cannot rule each other themselves, [High Heaven] establishes a king for them, so as to induce good order among them. That being the case, regulating the lands within the four seas is not done for the sake of the Son of Heaven, nor are the ranks of the men in service established for their own sakes. Both are done for the sake of the common people. The ruler is to send down the Three Governors (San Tong)²⁶ and fix the start of the Three First Months (San Zheng) [calendrical cycles] sequentially.²⁷ He is to do away with men of immoral conduct, while opening up [prestigious appointments] to men of good character. He is not to unduly favor one family [his own] and thereby make it plain that the empire under Heaven's care is the possession of the *whole empire*, rather than one man's possession. The true king himself practices the Way and its Power. He accedes to the patterns of Heaven and Earth. He loves his people universally. He is benevolent and compassionate. Thus a sense of his grace and favor extends all the way down [beyond animate creatures] to the very vegetation [in his lands].²⁸ He taxes his people lightly,

never taking more than the customary number of people for labor service. His palaces, carriages, and robes do not [in number or in quality] exceed the sumptuary regulations. In matters of state he is frugal, so his resources suffice. His people are harmonious, so the Hexagram-*qi* (*Gua qi*)²⁹ order follows [Jing Fang's (d. 33 BCE) predictions], and the Five Proofs (Wu Zheng)³⁰ appear when due, and the common people live to a ripe old age, and even the common grasses thrive. Then will all auspicious signs be sent down, in order to make it crystal clear [to all] that [Heaven] makes the realm secure and aids it.

Now when there are

those who err in the way and whose conduct is reckless,
those who offend Heaven and wantonly destroy things,
those who indulge to excess and give way to their desires, immersing themselves in wine or illicit sex,
those who heed the advice of their women, while punishing or exiling worthy men of good intentions,³¹
those who separate themselves from their own flesh and blood, while entrusting real power to mediocre and petty men,³²
those who stiffen punishments and double labor services—

Then the commoners seethe with resentment. This in turn causes the Hexagram-*qi* to get out of order, and the signs of [Heaven's] displeasure to become evident and egregious. High Heaven then quakes with anger and rains down disasters and anomalies. Solar and lunar eclipses occur, and the Five Planets stray from their courses. Mountains fall, and waters overflow their banks. Springs gush forth, and weird prodigies appear together. Comets blaze across the sky, and the years of famine and dearth keep coming. Commoners then are cut off in their prime, and the myriad things die off young. If in the end the emperor does not mend his ways, realizing the harm that he is causing, the ill effects will accumulate and the [preconditions for dynastic] changeover will be complete. Then there will be no further warnings [from Heaven before the dynasty falls], and the Mandate will transfer to one of [greater] virtue. As the *Odes* says: "[Heaven] watches over the four corners / And [awards the man of virtue] this our house."³³

Now, as we all know, the constant way of Heaven and Earth, and the one thing that all the many true kings share in common, is [a determination] to excise malefactors and take positions away from those who neglect their duties,³⁴ so as to give the Mandate over to worthies and sages. Add to this that there are varying degrees of merit and virtue, varying lengths of allotted time spans [for rulers], and different ages are at different points in the cycle (perhaps in midcycle or at the end), and the fact that Heaven's way itself has times of florescence and decline. Your Majesty inherits the meritorious legacy of eight previous reigns. [As you are the ninth Han ruler], you confront the yang's last phase. You have passed the chronological conjunction of Three Times

Seven³⁵ and are now confronting that stage in the cycle corresponding to hexagram 25, No Hope (Wuwang), and moreover Your reign has hit the “Disasters in the 106th Year.” Now these Three Troubles,³⁶ though of disparate types, are due to converge in time.³⁷ The twenty-year interval since Your ascent to the throne in the first year of the reign period “Establish the Beginning” (33 BCE) has witnessed multiple disasters and great prodigies that overlap and are sharply increasing—more, even, than those recorded in the *Annals* classic. During the eight previous generations [of Han rule], such matters as these were clearly recorded, and no effort was made to keep them a secret. To make matters worse, this year, in the first month, on the *jihai* day [the first day of the month], there was a solar eclipse—all the more ominous for occurring on the very day when the year, month, and day all began their counts. Then, in the fourth month, on the *dingyou* day, the various meteorites in all directions in broad daylight rained down from the sky,³⁸ and in the seventh month, on the *xinwei* day, comets crossed the sky. As it is now the time of the Three Troubles converging, disasters and prodigies are proliferating. Therefore there have been famines and years of dearth, one following after another, so that there are no stores of grain left [in the imperial granaries or in private hands].³⁹

Now comets represent the very worst sort of inauspicious anomaly, as they are generated from the concentrated essential spirit of Earth. The response, which had stars falling to earth, will first emerge after the famines, which will spawn, in turn, civil wars. In other words, Your Majesty has little time to lose,⁴⁰ before even a sterling character accumulating good deeds [such as Your Majesty], will not be able to staunch the tide, I fear!⁴¹ Inside the palace, within the hidden recesses of the back apartments of the palace, the decline will stem from arrogant officials and angry females, drunkenness and all sorts of debauchery; the end result will be treason. In the gardens, hunting preserves, thoroughfares, and lanes within the Northern Palace, the men and women of the consort clans take their leisure. This is to repeat the chaotic conditions that once gave rise to Zheng Shu and Cui Shu [inglorious regicides].⁴² Outside the capital local generals will act like second Fan Bings, Su Lings, Chen Shengs, and Xiang Liangs, stirring up rebellion after rebellion.⁴³ With the palace in chaos night and day, and daily warnings to the ZhuXia [civilized peoples of the Central States], they will raise troops, timing the uprising to the Fire horn [i.e., Mars’s trail].⁴⁴ This [razor-thin] dividing line between safety and danger should be a matter of grave concern for the ruling house. The reason why your servant Gu Yong is so distraught, chilled to the core of his being, is that the forewarnings have been appearing for years now. Below [outside Chang’an, among your subjects] is where it will all begin, but later the changes will be all too apparent above [i.e., in the fortunes of the ruling house]. How can one not proceed with the utmost caution?!

Disasters can arise from trifling matters, and treason can be generated from mere carelessness. I would have Your Majesty correct the duties between ruler and officials, so that never again will Your Majesty eat and drink with these despicable and corrupt good-for-nothings. As a rule the [eunuch] Attendants at the Yellow Gates⁴⁵ assigned to

the back palace ladies are arrogant and disrespectful to others; due to their drunkenness, they quite regularly neglect to adopt the proper demeanor of officials, and they should all be dismissed, with none of them retained.

You yourself should earnestly attend to the Three Main Relations and improve the administration of the back palaces. Rein in and keep at a distance⁴⁶ all those who are arrogant and envious, while promoting to positions close to You those whose conduct complies with [the highest standards]. Below, bestow Your favors upon those who are now thoroughly discouraged, and induce harmony among those hearts that now harbor some resentment toward You [due to Your previous neglect]. Protect the very highest dignity [which is Yours by right]. Seize hold of the authority that comes with the imperial status. At court You should earnestly see to becoming a model of exemplary [conduct] before setting out in Your carriage.⁴⁷ You should array your troops, but amend Your conduct before proceeding to do anything. May You never again demean Your person by these outings from the palace on Your own. May You never again eat and drink in the households of Your inferiors, whether male or female. When the Three Trouble Points have been removed, any route that might lead to rebellion will be blocked, unquestionably.

With regard to the troops being raised in the ZhuXia: the first signs will come from the people's famines and dearth and the officials' lack of commiseration,⁴⁸ the unrest prompted by the plight of the Hundred Clans and by increases in taxes and exactions. This will cause Your subjects to feel resentment and distance from Your Majesty, without Your knowledge. As the *Changes* classic says, "Hoarding brings nourishment in abundance: for the lesser, auspiciousness, but for the greater, disasters."⁴⁹ The commentary says: "When bad harvests occur, but no harm ensues [since the government has reserves to dedicate to emergency measures], this we call Greatness (hexagram 11). When disasters and floods occur, however, this signifies Heaven's blame."⁵⁰ The text *On Weird Prodigies* says, "When the barriers on the gates move and the locks fly off [of their own accord], this means the ruler is acting immorally while his officials do wrong. Then will high Heaven's blame come in the form of rebellious officials plotting usurpation."

When a ruler happens to meet with an age in decline, replete with famines and other disasters, calamities will be the inevitable consequence, if he does not decrease his expenditures and rather indulges himself in creature comforts.⁵¹ The commoners confront such difficulties and poverty that they have no way to supply their superior's demands [for added taxes]. They become upset, mournful, resentful, and filled with hatred. Hence the floodwaters! At the city walls and passes, the very strategic locations designed to preserve the realm, all security will soon be gone! Ergo the reference to bolts flying off. In recent years, twenty-one of the commanderies and kingdoms have been afflicted by floods, with the result that the various grains were not harvested. This year, both the silkworms and the wheat have suffered harm. All the rivers are surging with floodwaters, the Yangzi and Yellow River dikes have been breached, and great

floods have submerged the land in more than fifteen commanderies and kingdoms. For several years now the crops have been ruined, and the time is past for planting [the autumn crops for spring harvesting].

The commoners who have lost their jobs and inheritances⁵² have taken to wandering about the empire; they have flocked to the passes [in hopes of buying grain more cheaply there].⁵³ With great prodigies of unusual clarity, on the one hand, and ubiquitous floodwaters and destitute commoners, on the other, this is a time when the throne ought to be *reducing* the usual taxes while Your Majesty cuts down on his comforts. Instead some officials have sent in memorials asking that taxes and levies be raised. But such a policy would contravene the classics and accepted norms⁵⁴ and offend the people's feelings; it would only spread resentment and hasten the disaster. Bolts flying off—such policies would provoke this inauspicious sign.

In antiquity when the grain did not ripen, the court reduced the number of delicacies served at its tables. When disasters came repeatedly, the court also reduced its finery to a bare minimum. In inauspicious years, no palace roofs were plastered or decorated.⁵⁵ Such are the regulations of enlightened kings! As the *Odes* says, "Whenever others experienced a death / I crawled on my hands and knees to give them aid."⁵⁶ The *Analects* says, "When the Hundred Families have not enough for their needs, how could the ruler have enough?"⁵⁷ I pray Your Majesty not to approve the memorials asking for an increase in taxes and levies. I pray Your Majesty instead will extend the reduction in staffing and expenditures for those [under the privy treasurer]: that is, the Director of Provisions, Director of Grain Selection, those in palace service, the Imperial Offices in Charge of Equalizing [prices and supplies], those in charge of raising domestic animals, and those in charge of providing the animals for sacrifices.⁵⁸ I would have Your Majesty dismantle the imperial factories and weaving rooms, as well as the artisans' factories in the capital, commanderies, and kingdoms that supervise industrial work and textile production, and thereby help the Commissioner of Agriculture [perform his job]. Then will Your Majesty's grace and goodness spread widely, as You will have rescued those in real distress.

I would have Your Majesty open the passes and bridges, allowing migrants to come in and travel as they like, as this would relieve the immediate crisis. At the date for Establishing Spring, you should also dispatch envoys to travel around [inspecting] local customs, as this too would publicize the sagely virtues of the emperor. If Your Majesty would

sustain and commiserate with the orphans and widowers,
ask the people to tell Him what troubles them,
urge the high officials drawing 2,000 bushels [e.g., the Governors] to do the
same,
promulgate edicts encouraging farming and sericulture, and
forbid anyone to "steal" the people's time [by interfering with agriculture],

[then] Your Majesty would thereby comfort the hearts of the masses, and prevent the sort of rifts that lead to treason. Thus could the disorder in the civilized ZhuXia be laid to rest.

I have heard that the best sort of ruler is he who can work with those who do good, while refusing to ally himself with those who are destructive, whereas the worst sort of ruler does the opposite. Your Majesty, by the nature Heaven endowed, is both broad-minded and perspicacious. You have the capacities and instincts to be the best sort of ruler. I would have you spend a little time mulling over what Your simple-minded official has said, so that you awaken to the gravity of the Three Trouble Points, become deeply fearful of these great prodigies, and fix your heart on doing good. I would have You sharply reduce or entirely set aside Your worst inclinations, so that You never repeat past errors. If Your Majesty would concentrate His energies on the administration of the realm, Your absolute integrity would surely elicit Heaven's favorable response. And then what worry shall you have, either that successive prodigies will cluster above [afflicting Your person] or that calamities will afflict Your subjects?

Four Conjunction Theories from the *Odes* Traditions

Gu cites four theories from the *Odes* traditions: the Three Bases (San Ji), Four Beginnings (Si Shi), Five Junctures (Wu Ji), and Three Times Seven Distresses (San Qi Zhi E). Gu Yong's memorial refers to "approaching the Conjunction of Three Times Seven" (*she San Qi Zhi Jie Ji*), which means that at this time people thought they were approaching the time when 210 years ($3 \times 7 \times 10$) of Han rule was expected to elapse, a particularly ominous time according to the calendrical computation schemes.

Earlier, during the reign of Han Xuandi (74–48 BCE), one Lu Wenshu (fl. 70) had already predicted the occurrence of some disaster roughly 210 years after the founding of Western Han.⁵⁹ Gu Yong's assertions, which reflect the same line of reasoning, were presented in this memorial of 12 BCE, 195 years after the founding of the Han in 206 BCE, a mere 15 years before the inauspicious 210th year. (Not coincidentally, when Wang Mang assumed the throne in 9 CE as founder of the Xin ruling house, precisely 210 years after the founding of the Han, after the rule of twelve emperors, the same prediction would be cited to legitimate the new regime.)⁶⁰

Why should the 210th year mark the onset of a period of dire calamities? The answer to this question lies in a formula for calendrical cycles and a Conjunction theory (*Jihui shuo*) associated with the Qi interpretation of the *Odes*.⁶¹ Based on Lang Yi's detailed response in Eastern Han to an inquiry from the Secretariat (dated 133 CE), we see that by the Three Bases calendar computation system attached to the Qi *Odes*, each single cycle lasted 360 years. Each cycle was divided into twelve parts of 30 years corresponding to the Twelve Earthly Branches in order,⁶² with each part further subdivided into three equal parts, each 10 years long: *meng* (first), *zhong* (second), and *ji* (third)⁶³ (Table 11.01). By this calculation method, Gaozu, the Han founder (r. 206–195 BCE), began his

TABLE 11.01 The Three Times Seven theory

HEAVENLY BRANCH	PERIOD	DECADES IN 360-YEAR CYCLE	YEARS IN CYCLE OF 360/HAN YEAR	RELEVANT WESTERN CALENDAR YEARS
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	311–20		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	321–30		
Hai 亥	first period (<i>meng</i>)	331–40		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	341–50	342/Han 1	206 BCE
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	351–60		
Zi 子	first period (<i>meng</i>)	1–10		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	11–0		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	21–0		
Chou 丑	first period (<i>meng</i>)	31–40		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	41–50		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	51–60		
Yin 寅	first period (<i>meng</i>)	61–70		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	71–80		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	81–90		
Mao 卯	first period (<i>meng</i>)	91–100		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	101–10		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	111–20		
Chen 辰	first period (<i>meng</i>)	121–30		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	131–40		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	141–50		
Si 巳	first period (<i>meng</i>)	151–60		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	161–70		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	171–80	174/Han 195	12 BCE (Gu Yong)
Wu 午	first period (<i>meng</i>)	181–90		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	191–200	191/Han 210	9 CE (Xin dynasty)
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	201–10		
Wei 未	first period (<i>meng</i>)	211–20		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	221–30		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	231–40		
Shen 申	first period (<i>meng</i>)	241–50		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	251–60		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	261–70		
You 酉	first period (<i>meng</i>)	271–80		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	281–90		
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	291–300		
Xu 戌	first period (<i>meng</i>)	301–10		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	311–20	314/Han 333 320/Han 339	127 CE (Yang Hou) 133 CE (Lang Yi)
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	321–30		
Hai 亥	first period (<i>meng</i>)	331–40		
	second period (<i>zhong</i>)	341–50	342/Han 360 346/Han 364	159 CE (Li Yun)
	third period (<i>jī</i>)	351–60		
Zi 子	first period (<i>meng</i>)	1–10		

Note: The gray zones are the danger zones, with the lightest gray (in Mao and You) indicating a transfer in governance (*ge zheng* 革政), medium gray (in Wu and Hai) a transfer of the Mandate (*ge ming* 革命), and the darkest gray (in Xu) Heaven's Gate (Tian Men 天門). Table generated by Griet Vankeerberghen.

reign in the second year of the *zhong* period (i.e., the second subdivision) of the Earthly Branch Hai. By the Three Times Seven theory, applying the formula of 210 years to the dynasty from the date of its founding, one would arrive at the first year of the *zhong* period for the Earthly Branch Wu.

A closer look at Lang Yi's Eastern Han memorial may help us ascertain the underlying significance of the *zhong* period for Gu Yong and his contemporaries. In 133 CE, when Lang Yi submitted his letter to the throne, Han rule had endured for a total of 339 years since its founding, it then being in a year that corresponded to the *zhong* subdivision of the Earthly Branch Xu. Lang Yi's memorial cited *Shi fan lishu* (*The Overflowing Calendrical Pivot Attached to the Odes*) to defend his reasoning: "Mao and You make for transfers in governance [the succession of emperors and/or regents?]. Wu and Hai make for transfers of the Mandate. When spirits are at Heaven's Gate, they observe and listen to each and every one of your doings [lit., comings and goings]."⁶⁴

"Heaven's Gate" is the term for the temporal node located between Xu and Hai.⁶⁵ The 60 years belonging to Wu and Hai were dangerous years for "transferring the Mandate," and the *zhong* or second 10-year period of Xu came very close in time to the dangerous Hai years; thus, during these parts of the cycle it behooved the throne to recognize that the ruling house was in danger of collapse and that it must please Heaven in all future acts, if total collapse of dynastic power was to be avoided and the Han's Mandate be renewed. As readers will recall, it was also during the second *zhong* period in an Earthly Branch that Lu Wenshu and Gu Yong issued their warnings late in Western Han, so we now understand the significance of the *zhong* period for Han calendrical experts from both Western and Eastern Han.⁶⁶

But why did so many calendrical calculations begin with Hai? Put another way, what was the character and significance of each of the Earthly Branches in relation to cyclical periods? In order to answer these complex questions, we must now review the Four Beginnings and Five Junctures theories (Table 11.02) employed in traditions attached to the Qi version of the *Odes* classic. The Four Beginnings theory correlated four poems from the *Odes*—"Great Brightness" ("Da ming"), "Four Steeds" ("Si mu"), "Barbel Fish" ("[Nan you] Jia yu"), and "Wild Geese" ("Hong yan")⁶⁷—with the Earthly Branches Hai, Yin, Si, and Shen, since these branches were thought to correspond to the start of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, respectively. In the Qi version of the *Odes*, analysis of these four odes' content led scholars to believe that they together perfectly described the rise, development, florescence, and decline of the fabled Western Zhou dynasty, and, by further analogy, the waxing and waning of yin and yang as well.⁶⁸

One passage in Yi Feng's biography (cited in n. 16) referred to "the *Odes* having Five Junctures." Within the larger processes associated with the regular waxing and waning of yang and yin, these junctures were identified as the five "nodal points" marking transitions and named after the five Earthly Branches Mao, You, Wu, Xu, and Hai,⁶⁹ which were then tied to the following five *Odes* poems: "Heaven Protects" ("Tian bao"), "Minister of War" ("Qi fu"), "Gathering White Millet" ("Cai qi"), "Tenth Month Conjunction

TABLE 11.02 The Four Beginnings and Five Junctures theories

HEAVENLY BRANCH	FOUR BEGINNINGS POEMS	SEASON	YIN-YANG CYCLE	FIVE JUNCTURES POEMS	YIN-YANG NODAL POINT
Zi 子					
Chou 丑					
Yin 寅	“Four Steeds” (“Si mu”)	Start of summer	?		
Mao 卯				“Heaven Protects” (“Tian bao”)	?
Chen 辰					
Si 巳	“Barbel Fish” (“[Nan you] Jia yu”)	Start of autumn	?		
Wu 午				“Gathering White Millet” (“Cai qi”)	Apex of yang <i>qi</i> , giving birth to yin
Wei 未					
Shen 申	“Wild Geese” (“Hong yan”)	Start of winter	?		
You 酉				“Minister of War” (“Qi fu”)	?
Xu 戌				“Tenth Month Conjunction” (“Shi yue zhi jiao”)	?
Hai 亥	“Great Brightness” (“Da ming”)	Start of spring	?	“Great Brightness” (“Da ming”)	Apex of yin, giving birth to yang

Note: The danger zones coincide with those of Table 11.01. Table generated by Griet Vankeerberghen.

tion” (“Shi yue zhi jiao”), and “Great Brightness.”⁷⁰ As all of these five poems describe civil wars, foreign attacks, and changes in succession or dynastic transfers,⁷¹ Western and Eastern Han thinkers alike deemed the Earthly Branches Mao, You, Wu, Xu, and Hai extremely dangerous times liable to calamities and ominous events.⁷² The Five Junctures theory therefore differed from the Han Four Beginnings theory in that two of the Four Beginnings signified auspicious times. Moreover, these Five Junctures were all said to mark the nodal points between yang and yin, that is, points in time when yin turns into yang or yang into yin; and if we examine the characteristics ascribed to each of these nodal points, we see that Mao and You supposedly marked only “transfers in governance” (i.e., in the succession), whereas Wu, Xu, and Hai led to “transfers in the Mandate,” a phrase portending the rise of an entirely new ruling house.

Clearly, from the point of view of the Western Han ruling house, the final three Earthly Branch positions were far more dangerous than the first two.⁷³ Among the Earthly Branches, Wu was thought to represent the apex of yang *qi*, which would give birth to yin; whereas Hai was thought to be the apex of yin, which would give birth to yang. Thus Hai, as the first of the Four Beginnings and a nodal turning point within the Five Junctures theory, simultaneously represented both life and death, and the beginning and the end of the cycle.⁷⁴ Calculations according to the Three Bases theory always began with Hai. And since Xu and Hai were adjacent to one another, they tended to

be viewed as a single unit—a dangerous 60-year interval through which dynastic rule must survive, if it was to successfully move beyond inauspicious yin to an era of auspicious yang.

The foregoing helps explain why predictions of calamities and dynastic changeovers were made in years corresponding to the first year of Wu's *zhong* period (according to the Three Times Seven theory) and to the tenth year in Xu's *zhong* period as well. The official histories mention other instances of predictions of this sort. For example, the *Hou Hanshu* biography of the omenologist Yang Hou, in a passage dated to 127 CE, mentions a possible occurrence of an omen in the 350th year of the ruling house.⁷⁵ Since the year 127 CE marked 333 years from the founding of Western Han—close enough to the end-time to spur the court to action, yet far enough away from the cycle's end at 360 years to take meaningful action—Yang Hou's memorial was meant to warn the court to take immediate action to mend its ways, lest the throne be imperiled. Notably, 127 CE corresponded to the fourth year of another *zhong* period in Xu, while the 350th year of Han rule would correspond to the first year of the *zhong* period in the still more dangerous Hai interval; note that the two years mentioned belong to the critical nodal points in Xu and Hai, according to the Three Bases and Five Junctures theories.

Another historical example of this same phenomenon can be found in Li Yun's memorial of 159 CE. Li's memorial mentions that 364 years had passed since the time of Gaozu, also that the ruling house had already passed through one cycle or "turn" of 360 years (*yi zhou*). According to the Three Bases and Five Junctures theories, the year 159 CE was the fifth year of the *zhong* period in Hai, which interval supposedly signaled a transfer of the Mandate; after all, Han Gaozu himself had come to power in the *zhong* period in Hai. Li Yun therefore urged the throne to take due precautions to forestall another uprising like Gaozu's own. Li's memorial specifically urged that preventive measures be taken against those whose surnames had the "essence of yellow" (*huang jing*),⁷⁶ insofar as people who belonged to the Earth Power (or phase) could conquer Han, which ruled by Fire. An intense political struggle ensued.⁷⁷ Clearly, many members of the governing elite at the time believed in theories alleging that a particular dynastic cycle would come to an end after an interval of 360 years.

Hexagram Cycle Theory

Turning to the next puzzle, what did Gu Yong mean by the phrase "confronting the Hexagram Cycle 'No Hope'"? Ying Shao's (d. ca. 203) commentary to the *Hanshu* passage states that hexagram 25, No Hope (Wuwang), signified the greatest disasters and anomalies; a later commentator, Yan Shigu (581–645 CE), said much the same.⁷⁸ But those two explanations do not suffice to indicate if Gu Yong's reference to "Hexagram Cycles" denoted fixed intervals of time that themselves determined good and ill fortune over the course of each cycle, or whether he thought different periods would have different Hexagram Cycles. These questions merit further discussion.

Like the calendrical points predicted by the Three Times Seven theory (discussed above) and the Nine Yang theory (discussed below),⁷⁹ the Hexagram Cycle theory evidently focused on years rather than months, days, or parts of a day, with the result that references to No Hope probably referred to an entire year correlated to hexagram 25. Certainly, the three instances known from the official histories suggest that hexagrams were assigned to entire years.

First, in 12 CE, the fourth year of Wang Mang's reign period Shijianguo, Wang issued an order noting that he was in his fourth year of the Xin dynasty, and the following year would be the fifth since he had received the Mandate. The time for the disasters predicted by the Nine Yang theory—disasters due to arrive in the 106th year after the Han founding—had already passed, as Wang Mang noted. Wang continued: "With hexagram 20, Contemplation [Guan], and hexagram 35, Progress [Jin], in control of the year, I follow the instructions and revelations [i.e., divinations] from the turtle shells and milfoil stalks."

Wang Mang made these remarks while considering a "tour of inspection" to the eastern regions in the second month of the following year.⁸⁰ Qian Daxin (1728–1804 CE) noted that Guan and Jin were the names of two hexagrams, and I think his suggestion is correct, as only that identification relates Wang's first clause to his second about divination.⁸¹ Moreover, the hexagram-line statements in the *Changes* for hexagram 20 relate to such tours: "The former kings established their transforming influence by inspecting their regions, closely observing the people, and setting up edifying exemplars."⁸²

In addition, the Judgment (Tuanci) of hexagram 35 (Jin) states, "Jin means to advance [*jin* 進]. Brightness will emerge above the earth. In conformity with it, we adhere to this great brightness."⁸³ Apparently, with the reference to "great brightness," Wang felt the time for the predicted disasters had already passed, and so his reign was about to enter a period of extraordinary glory and illumination. As astute readers will note, the theme of "great brightness" links the *Changes*' Judgment to two theories in the *Odes* interpretive traditions that discuss the ode entitled "Great Brightness." That "Guan and Jin controlled the year" is definitive evidence that hexagrams could be correlated with single years, but this chapter will defer discussion of these two related questions: which years were associated with these hexagrams, and how?

The second instance regarding hexagrams and specific years concerns an unspecified date after Wang Mang's downfall in 23 CE. A certain Su Jing stated in a letter addressed to Liu Xin's nephew, Liu Gong, that "hexagram 8, Unity [Bi], controls this year . . . with its power residing in the central palace" (*jinnian bigua busui . . . de zai zhonggong*). At the time, Liu Gong was serving under Division Commander Deng Zhongkuang, whose commission from General Yan Cen ordered Deng to supervise an area of great strategic importance to the throne, Yin county in Nanyang. Deng, upon receipt of the letter from Su, laid down his arms.⁸⁴ Why? The year 28 CE corresponded, in the sixty-year cycle of Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches, to the years Xu and Zi, two Earthly Branches. According to the Five Phases theories, Xu governed the Earth

Phase and the center “direction,” so it is likely that Su’s statement about “power residing in the central palace” may refer to that. But regardless of the date of this letter, we have here yet another piece of evidence of a single hexagram (in this case, hexagram 8) “controlling a year.”

The third instance linking hexagrams to years was in 133 CE, during the reign of Shundi. Lang Yi’s memorial spoke of hexagram 58, Joyous (Dui), “governing affairs . . . since the previous year,” after which he stated, “According to the *Secret Calendar for Polar Oppositions in the Changes*, this year corresponds to the waning of hexagram 47, Kun [Exhaustion]. In all cases, in the hexagram Kun when yang is in the second position, that calendrical conjuncture will ensure a timely response in terms of the *qi* solar period.” Lang Yi’s talk of “the previous year” employed a common calculation method in the reckoning arts, as we shall see. Lang Yi’s calculation started from the eleventh or Zi month of the previous year, whence he arrived at his conclusion that the two hexagrams Dui and Kun were both assigned to the same year, in the second year of the Yangjia reign period, or 133 CE. If we look at Jing Fang’s Eight Palaces Hexagram sequence theory,⁸⁵ Dui and Kun were two of the eight hexagrams deemed the “rulers” or “reigning powers” over all the rest of the hexagrams (Chart 11.01).⁸⁶ This evidence from Jing Fang’s authoritative hexagram sequence constitutes yet a third proof, then, that astronomical charts like those found in the *Changes*’ apocrypha linked given hexagrams with specific years and calculated the astronomical cycles in that way.

The second and third examples above clearly correlate a given year with a specific hexagram; but the third example shows that a single year could also be associated with two hexagrams. Taking as our starting point the statement above that hexagrams 58 and 47 corresponded to the single year of 133 CE, and counting backward in time using Jing Fang’s sequence, such that we always assign two hexagrams to a single year, it seems that the paired hexagrams 5 and 8 (Xu and Bi) were correlated with the single year 28 CE (i.e., the fourth year of Guangwudi’s reign). This suggests that the second example above should be dated to 28 CE.

Using the same system to count still farther back, we can see that the third year of Wang Mang’s reign (11 CE) should be assigned to hexagrams 20 and 23 (Guan and Bo) and Wang’s fourth year (12 CE) to hexagrams 35 and 14 (Jin and Dayou). This seems to correspond well with the first example above, in which Wang Mang was thinking that the dangerous Nine Yang in the 106th year had already passed, since the hexagrams Guan and Jin controlled the year. Indeed, if we follow the calculation method to be explained in the next section, any disaster predicted by the Nine Yang theory should have ended by the third year of Wang Mang’s Xin dynasty (11 CE), the 106th year after the Han founding; and according to Jing Fang’s Eight Palaces hexagram sequence theory, hexagrams 20 and 35 *should* have controlled the third and fourth years of Wang Mang’s reign. Hence Wang Mang’s confidence. Certainly such explanations would have suited Wang Mang’s ideological needs, insofar as they made sense to the many members of the governing elite, who truly believed in Jing Fang’s hexagram sequence theory.

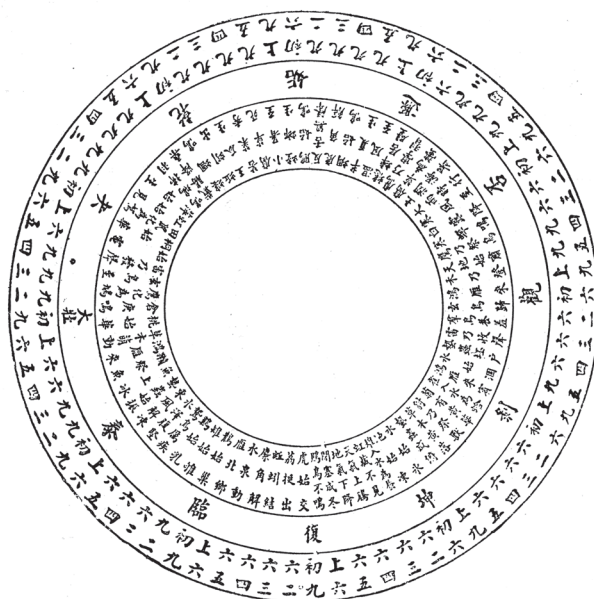
CHART 11.01 The Eight Palaces hexagram sequence theory associated with Jing Fang (77–37 BCE) divides the calendar year, epochs, and hence all of cosmic time into eight discrete units. The division starts with Qian (trigram, hexagram 1; in the “Eight trigrams” row, column no. 1), correlated with high summer and due south, and proceeds through to Dui (trigram, hexagram 58; in the “Eight trigrams” row, column no. 8), correlated with different times and places, depending on the hexagram cycle theory. Especially inauspicious times are indicated here as well. Image generated by Erin Leigh Inama, after Gao Huaimin, *Liang Han Yixue shi*, 112.

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
兌宮 兌 ☱	離宮 離 ☲	巽宮 巽 ☴	坤宮 坤 ☷	艮宮 艮 ☶	坎宮 坎 ☵	震宮 震 ☳	乾宮 乾 ☰	八宮 八純卦
困 ☱☲	賁 ☲☳	畜小 ☴☵	復 ☷☵	賁 ☶☳	節 ☵☶	豫 ☵☳	姤 ☴☲	一世
萃 ☱☳	鼎 ☲☱	人家 ☴☶	臨 ☷☳	畜大 ☶☵	屯 ☵☳	解 ☵☴	遯 ☶☲	二世
咸 ☱☲	濟未 ☲☱	益 ☴☶	泰 ☷☳	損 ☶☵	濟既 ☵☶	恒 ☵☳	否 ☷☲	三世
蹇 ☱☵	蒙 ☲☳	妄无 ☴☲	壯大 ☷☳	睽 ☵☲	革 ☵☳	升 ☴☳	觀 ☶☲	四世
謙 ☱☲	渙 ☴☳	噬嗑 ☲☲	夬 ☶☳	履 ☵☶	豐 ☶☳	井 ☴☳	剝 ☶☲	五世
過小 ☱☲	訟 ☲☱	頤 ☶☲	需 ☷☳	孚中 ☵☳	夷明 ☵☳	過大 ☵☳	晉 ☶☳	roaming Souls
妹歸 ☴☲	人同 ☲☱	蠱 ☴☶	比 ☷☲	漸 ☵☶	師 ☵☲	隨 ☵☲	有大 ☶☳	Returned Souls

So, to which year did Gu Yong refer when he mentioned the No Hope hexagram? Since the historical records seem consistent with the calculations posited above, let us continue counting back in time by the same method. If we do that, we find that the year 2 BCE, the first year of Aidi’s (r. 7–1 BCE) Yanshou reign period, corresponded to two hexagrams: 25 (No Hope) and 21 (Shike, or “Biting Through”). Apparently Gu Yong submitted his memorial to the throne in 12 BCE, a decade in advance of predicted calamities, hoping that timely action by the imperial court might forestall them.

Clearly, Gu Yong’s Hexagram Cycle theory owed much to Jing Fang’s explanations for the *Changes*, so it is hardly surprising that Gu’s *Hanshu* biography praised Gu’s expertise in Jing Fang’s *Changes*, as well as his familiarity with the Hexagram-qi theories articulated by Meng Xi and Jing Fang.⁸⁷ The Hexagram-qi theories, in contrast to the other theories discussed above, tended to assign hexagrams to specific days of the year (Chart 11.02).⁸⁸ At a basic level, then, Gu’s explications drew upon a number of different *Changes*’ correlations and calendrical computations, and we can find members of the governing elite from Western Han often employing similarly complex theories

李 溉 卦 氣 圓 圖



Li Gai's (early 11th c.) Hexagram-Qi Chart, Based on Jing Fang's Theories

CHART 11.02 The Hexagram-qi cycle diagram proposed by *Changes* expert Li Gai 李溉 (late tenth–early eleventh century) on the basis of Jing Fang's Hexagram-qi cycle. (As yet we have no Han-era manuscripts that depict Jing Fang's theories.) The outermost ring of the concentric circles is made up of the hexagram lines for the corresponding hexagram. For example: Hexagram 11, Tai 泰, has near it 初九 九二 九三 六四 六五 上六 (meaning, “yang in the bottom line, yang line in second place, yang line in third place, yin line in fourth place, yin line in fifth place, and yin in the top line”). Each of the twelve hexagrams assigned to the twelve months have this sort of description. The innermost ring has lines encapsulating the characteristic changes in the cosmic order for each of the twenty-four solar periods (e.g., the four-line characters that say “East wind—freezing cold dissipates” (*dong feng jie bing* 東風解凍). This is the early Chinese equivalent of the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, and these descriptions tally with our modern sense of things, at least before global warming. Image generated by Erin Leigh Inama after Gao Huaimin, *Liang Han Yixue shi*, 142.

during political debates.⁸⁹ Jing Fang's theories not only applied hexagrams to days, but also to months and years. For example, Jing's Jianhou theory⁹⁰ assigned the Six-Line Text of a given hexagram to “govern” a period of six months, making the Twelve-Line Texts in two successive hexagrams “govern” a year and sixty-four hexagrams “govern” thirty-two years, which Jing equated with one complete Jianhou cycle.⁹¹ Jing also created another method, the Accumulated Calculations Method (Ji Suan Fa), which tied hexagrams to the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches such that a given hexagram could signify one specific hour, day, month, or year.⁹²

Either of these two methods could have served as the basis for Gu Yong's Hexa-

gram Cycle, as both methods assigned individual years to individual hexagrams, even if Jing Fang's Jianhou theory was probably the more popular of the two, judging from extant citations. Moreover, the *Changes* apocrypha, loosely ascribed to the students of Meng Xi and Jing Fang,⁹³ also contain mention of a hexagram correlation method in which thirty-two years constituted one cycle, though this latter method substitutes the *Changes*' very own hexagram sequence for a second hexagram order evidently preferred by Jing when he was tying hexagrams to dates.⁹⁴ That the apocryphal texts' calculations do not generally conform to the *Changes*' own hexagram sequence merely indicates the dominance of Jing Fang's Eight Palaces hexagram sequence theory when making predictions.

From this discussion, we can conclude that in late Western and Eastern Han there existed Hexagram Cycle theories figuring thirty-two years per cycle, which suggests the close connections between the *Changes* literature and the key calendrical computation numbers (after all, $32 \times 2 = 64$, the total number of hexagrams). Apparently, the notion of thirty-two years per cycle (which converted the Hexagram-*qi* theory for days into years) exerted a palpable impact on the politics of the two Han dynasties.

Yin-Yang and the Convergence of the Triple Concordance System with the Nine Yang Theory

Yi Feng's theories about yin-yang in the *Changes* and Gu Yong's discussion of "Disasters in the 106th Year" both related one set of calendrical cycle numbers derived from the Triple Concordance calendrical system (*San Tong li*), a system typically traced to Liu Xin (d. 23 CE) but more likely an extension of Dong Zhongshu's (179–104 BCE) Three Governors theory based on the *Annals*. (Liu Xin perfected the theory by adding calculations based on figures he drew from the *Changes*.) Dong Zhongshu had noted that the first months of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou calendars differed: the Xia year began in the thirteenth month, or Yin; Shang, in the twelfth month, or Chou; and Zhou, in the eleventh month, or Zi. This meant that Xia was "governed" (*tong*) by black (signifying Heaven); Shang, by white (signifying Earth); and Zhou, by red (signifying Humanity), which Powers ruled by turns in a given historical cycle.⁹⁵

Liu Xin, absorbing this theory, introduced the concept of three governing cycles into calendrics and astronomy; hence, Liu's Triple Concordance theory, an adaptation of the old Xia calendar. This calendar used as its "point of origin" the moment when the winter solstice, new moon (*shuo*) of the eleventh month, and first day of the sexagesimal cycle (*jiazi*) coincided;⁹⁶ it also had Three Governors periods, each of which lasted 1,539 years. The second period began on the *jiachen* day of the year when the winter solstice and the new moon of the eleventh month next coincided 1,539 years later. Likewise, the third period began on the sexagesimal day 21 (*jiashen*) the next time when the winter solstice and the new moon of the eleventh month coincided.⁹⁷ Each of these three periods were then linked to the Five Phases *qi* theory (something that

Dong Zhongshu did not do),⁹⁸ so as to create a single Concordance cycle linking the calendrical orders to human affairs, with the length of each interval assigned to one of the Three Governors set by reference to calculations made in the *Changes*' traditions.

The Triple Concordance calendrical system divided each day into 81 parts.⁹⁹ This so-called Day Method (Rifa) was derived by squaring the figure 9, the figure assigned to both the Yellow Bell (Huangzhong) pitch pipes¹⁰⁰ and auspicious yang itself in the *Changes*' traditions.¹⁰¹ According to the rules for the intercalary months, one Rule (Zhang) was the equivalent to 19 years.¹⁰² The figure of 19 years was arrived at by adding 9 (the number assigned to Heaven) and 10 (the number assigned to Earth), the result being "the final figure uniting Heaven and Earth" (*he tian di zhong shu*). This figure of 19 was then multiplied by 81 (derived from the Day Method) to yield a total of 1,539 years, which matched one complete Governors cycle, or Rule, three of which make up the 4,617 years in a full Triple Concordance calendrical cycle. Thus we see in Liu Xin's theories the application of figures found in the *Changes*' interpretations of the calendrical computations for dynastic cycles.¹⁰³

According to the laws mandated by the Triple Concordance system, natural disasters would break out at fixed times, called "Nine Yang at the 106th Year." The relevant calculations were as follows, based on the 4,617 years of the complete Triple Concordance calendrical cycle (whose base year was Yuan, or "Origin"). After the first 106 years from a single Yuan there would come "Nine Yang [years]," that is, 9 years of yang-type disasters.¹⁰⁴ Eight more disaster periods would follow after the first, according to a fixed schedule:

The second, after an interval of 374 more years, with 9 years of yin-type disasters;
The third, after an interval of 480 more years, with 9 years of yang-type disasters;
The fourth, after an interval of 720 more years, with 7 years of yin-type disasters;
The fifth, after an interval of 720 more years, with 7 years of yang-type disasters;
The sixth, after an interval of 600 more years, with 5 years of yin-type disasters;
The seventh, after an interval of 600 more years, with 5 years of yang-type disasters;
The eighth, after an interval of 480 more years, with 3 years of yin-type disasters;
The ninth, after an interval of 480 more years, with 3 years of yang-type disasters.

Thus a full cycle of 4,617 years, equaling one Triple Concordance calendrical "era," would contain 57 years of natural disasters, divided among five yang phases and four yin phases, due to arrive at nine fixed intervals.¹⁰⁵

The term "Nine Yang" referred to severe droughts lasting nine years, while "Nine Yin" referred to severe floods lasting nine years. Judging by the numbers, the "Nine" in "Nine Yang" simply refers to the duration in years of the first set of disasters caused by dislocations in yang and yin *qi* after the first 106 years of any given era.¹⁰⁶ However, the "Nine" in "Nine Yang" may possibly refer to a total number of disaster periods, five of which were yang and four of which were yin; or to the predicted time each period was

to last (starting with 9 and gradually diminishing to 7, 5, and 3 years), since these four numbers were all yang numbers.¹⁰⁷ It matters not a whit.

What we still need to appreciate is the relation posited between the duration of the intervals between disasters and the only four possible numbers (9, 8, 7, and 6) that will result from manipulations of the milfoil stalks, which in turn generate the individual *Changes* Line Texts used in divinations.¹⁰⁸ If we adopt the commentator Meng Kang's (ca. 180–260 CE) explanation,¹⁰⁹ 374 plus 106 (the sum of the first two intervals, i.e., those preceding Nine Yang and Nine Yin) equals 480, which is $10 \times 6 \times 8$, or a product of six. Since the number 6, corresponding to "old yin" (*laoyin*), was deemed to be a "moving" (*bian*) hexagram line (i.e., a yin line that would soon change into yang), the Han experts predicted that another interval of 480 years between periods of disasters would follow, constituting a third interval. Similarly, the figure 720 of the fourth interval is equal to $10 \times 9 \times 8$, a product of nine. And since the number 9 ("old yang," or *laoyang*) was also an "extreme" and consequently a moving line, the experts predicted another interval of 720 years, which would constitute a fifth interval. As for the following two intervals of 600 years, which total 1,200 years, these may be computed as $10 \times 7 \times 8$ (or 560) and $10 \times 8 \times 8$ (or 640), which tallies with the total of 1,200 recorded here. But since neither of the divination results obtained from the number 7 ("young yang," or *shaoyang*) or the number 8 ("young yin," or *shaoyin*) represented hexagram lines that "moved" (i.e., transformed into their complements), the difference between their products was simply split, so that both the sixth and seventh intervals were assumed to be 600 years long. The next two intervals between periods of disasters were produced in similar fashion by multiplying 6 by 8 by 10, to arrive at the figure of 480 years.¹¹⁰

Technical experts during Western and Eastern Han often related disasters to the Nine Yang theory. Gu Yong's discussion of disasters in the 106th year can be explained as follows: Precisely 106 years of Western Han rule had passed by 2 CE, the second year of Pingdi's Yuanshi reign period, if an expert was counting forward from 104 BCE,¹¹¹ the first year of the Grand Inception calendar (only later to be replaced by the Triple Concordance calendar). Gu Yong submitted his famous memorial to Chengdi in 12 BCE, precisely ninety-four years after 104 BCE, when the 106th year was approaching fast. Therefore Gu Yong felt duty bound to warn the emperor of the impending troubles—nine full years of extreme yang, most likely years of severe drought—for no one at Chengdi's court could have predicted Chengdi's death, which made the 106th year of Han rule come under Chengdi's successor, Pingdi. As we have seen, the year 11 CE happened to fall in the third year after Wang Mang's founding of the Xin dynasty, but, contrary to expectations, after this third year the natural disasters did *not* appreciably lessen.¹¹² For this reason, Wang Mang's edicts continually mentioned the "Nine Yang at the 106th year" theory, in hopes that his weary subjects would look for better times to arrive soon, as the disasters predicted by this theory came to an end.¹¹³

During Wang Mang's reign, the Nine Yang theory was said to apply only to specific types of phenomena—droughts and floods. But later the same theory was applied to all sorts of disasters. Together the two Han dynasties, Eastern and Western, lasted for some four hundred years, and since the Nine Yang theory could only apply to disasters due to begin in the 106th year (or multiples thereof), the Liu ruling house had collapsed long before the late fourth century, when the second crisis period was due to arrive. (The last Han emperor was forced to abdicate in 220 CE.) That perhaps explains why the documents relating to this theory are somewhat limited. Nevertheless, they still offer modern readers a glimpse into the thinking that many high court officials engaged in when making complex predictions according to the classics and then-current calendrical systems, in which the phrase “Nine Yang in the 106th year” was shorthand for all sorts of terrible and prolonged disasters.

Conclusion

Gu Yong's prophecy regarding the “Three Troubles”—a catchphrase for the series of cataclysms associated with the end of a cosmic era—calls attention to the sense of impending doom that prevailed among certain officials in Chengdi's time. The cyclical theories devised during late Western and Eastern Han combined calendrical computations with references to yin-yang and the Five Phases theory. Basically, such theories were not preoccupied with individual life spans, but with the fate of dynasties and ruling houses and, even possibly, the cosmos itself. Because the theoretical links between calendrical formulae, the politics of the day, and policy making were so tightly constructed, policy debates at court often invoked such calendrical theories, making them the theoretical bases for political reforms. Needless to say, calendrical computations have no necessary connection with predictions made about cyclically occurring natural disasters. But once theories of natural disasters took on a political coloration, identifying the ruler's faults as the cause of natural disasters, the idea arose that disasters could be avoided via certain changes in policy and in imperial conduct. And although a disaster sent by Heaven or determined by a cosmic order seems hardly the same as a disaster brought on by human misconduct, if we are following modern logic, the mutual sympathies binding Heaven and human in Han theories meant that either type of disaster could plausibly warn of the impending end of a dynasty in a declining age.¹¹⁴

Pre-Qin thinkers, armed with calendrical computations, had already concluded that “every five hundred years will see a true king arise,” and pre-Qin thinkers had devised the Five Powers cycle, but it was not until the second half of Western Han that new calendrical theories arose in connection with interpretations of the classics and the apocryphal texts. Among the most important of these were the Three Bases, Four Beginnings, Five Junctures, and the Three Times Seven Distresses theories, all of which derived from traditions attached to the Qi version of the *Odes* and that classic's

apocryphal texts. But notably, these roughly contemporaneous theories did not employ cycles of the same length: the *Odes* apocrypha took 360 years as one cycle; the Triple Concordance calendar and Nine Yang theory, 4,617 years; and the *Changes* Hexagram Cycle theory, 32 years.

Calendrical cycles were believed to be predetermined, so how did Han thinkers connect that sense of predetermination with their other beliefs? Because the computations registered simultaneously both the end of an old cycle and the start of a new cycle, any set of calendrical figures carried dual meanings, lending them different significances for different political groups. For example, in the arguments of various classicists, the Three Times Seven Distresses theory (originally devised to predict the date when the ruling house of Han would collapse) became an important instrument in policy debates and reforms designed to help the Han ruling house through any crises, to serenely begin an entirely new auspicious cycle. Wang Mang, however, used the very same theories to demonstrate the illegitimacy of continued dynastic rule for Western Han and to instead justify the rise of his own Xin dynasty.

We discern the traces of these calendrical computations most clearly in the names of the changing reign periods, a great many of which incorporate words meaning “inception” (*chu*), “beginning” (*shi*), “origin” (*yuan*), and “new” (*xin*), all signifying the ruler’s desire to see the dynasty continue. Similarly, talk of “conjunctures” (*ji hui*), “ominous events” (*e hui*), and “final numbers” (*shu jin*), no less than theories purporting to supply an end date for the ruling house, all led people to consider the possibility of impending dynastic change or transfer. Any adviser using such rhetoric necessarily had to be extraordinarily cautious and euphemistic, lest he be accused of outright treason or incitement to treason. Well-known technical experts who failed to evade such charges included Sui Hong (d. ca. 78 BCE) and Xia Heliang (condemned to death in 5 BCE) during Western Han, and Li Yun, who was executed ca. 159 CE, in Eastern Han. Their ideas, and the tragic personal consequences of those ideas, attest to the political impact of the calendrical computation systems.

Notes

- 1 As used in *Mencius* 4B/13 (“Gongsun Chou xia”); see *Mengzi zhengyi*, 309.
- 2 This term will be explained below. See pp. 311–14.
- 3 For example, during the reigns of Zhaodi (r. 87–74 BCE) and Xuandi (r. 74–48 BCE), Lu Wenshu (fl. ca. 70 BCE) followed his grandfather in transmitting mathematical astronomy (*tianwen*). His calculation that the Han would experience natural disasters and omens at “three times seven” (*san qi*) is a calendrical formula designed to predict the occurrence of natural disasters and omens. See *Hanshu* 51.2372. For *san qi*, see below.
- 4 In late Western Han, for example, Gongsun Shu (d. 36 CE) styled himself as the Son of Heaven (Tianzi), citing the apocryphal records to the effect that Kongzi had established the institutions and models (*zhi fa*) of Han, and so predicted its downfall in the twelfth reign. See *Hou Hanshu* 14.538 (biog. of Gongsun Shu). The idea was that at the end of Pingdi’s reign (1 BCE–6 CE), “the calendrical computations [i.e., a full cycle] had come to an end.”

- 5 NB: The “heaven” in the term Tian Ming is not capitalized, since Tian/tian did not invariably imply an anthropomorphic deity, but also a turn in the cosmic cycle.
- 6 Wang Chong uses the phrase “the computational numbers of Heaven and Earth are just so” (*tian di li shu dang ran ye*). See *Lunheng jiaoshi*, *juan* 17, 769–70 (“Zhi qi”) (Huang Hui 1990).
- 7 Jia Yi (200–168 BCE), for example, still used this theory in advising the throne. See *Jia Yi ji jiaozhu*, *juan* 1, *pian* 4, 26 (“Shu ning”) (Wu and Li 1989).
- 8 *Shiji* 27.1344. Ban Gu accepted this idea in principle, even if his description of the theory differed slightly. See *Hanshu* 26.1300.
- 9 Even though Sima Qian recorded the promulgation of the Grand Inception (Taichu) calendrical reform in 104 BCE, his ideas were not the same as those expressed by Deng Ping (fl. ca. 104 BCE); Deng’s Taichu calendar produced an epoch of 1,539 years rather than 1,520. See *Hanshu* 21.974–76. Moreover, the text *Lishu jiazi bian* (*The Jiazi Calendrical Computations*), recorded in the “Treatise on Astronomy” in the *Shiji*, still relied upon the Quarter Remainder system to calculate time, with the result that it figured 1,520 years per epoch. See Liu Caonan 2009, 10–12. After the Grand Inception system, introduced in 104 BCE, came the Triple Concordance system (*San tong li*), introduced circa 9 CE. The latter was in force until Zhangdi (r. 60–88 CE) in Eastern Han “restored” the old Quarter Remainder calendar. See Cullen 2010, esp. 327. The *Hou Hanshu*’s “Treatise on Pitch Pipes and Calendars” (“Lü li, xia”) notes, “An epoch follows a rule of 1,520 years.” See *Hou Hanshu* 93.3058.
- 10 The apocryphal texts are authoritative traditions (often relating to technical matters) that were associated with the classics but were not part of the classics themselves. Insofar as many of the apocryphal texts contained political predictions, they tended to be suppressed. Today we have only collections of fragments, the best being Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92.
- 11 Here it is important to note two things: one, Yao was considered the distant ancestor for the Liu clan, the ruling house of Han, and thus to speak of Yao was also to speak of Han; and two, the apocrypha cannot always be dated with confidence, given their fragmentary nature.
- 12 See *Shangshu kao ling yao*, in *Chōshū isho shūsei*, vol. 2, 355 (Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92).
- 13 *Yi wei ganqian du*, cited in *Chōshū isho shūsei*, vol. 1B, 56 (Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92).
- 14 Zhangdi and Lang Yi both cited the following from the *Chunqiu bao gan tu*: “At the calculation of the Dipper in the 300th year, one should change the system.” The figure of 300 served as an approximation for 304 years. See *Hou Hanshu* (treatises) 2.3026; *Hou Hanshu* 30.1066 (biog. of Lang Yi).
- 15 For example, the text *Chunqiu ming li xu* employed 304-, 1,520-, and 4,560-year cycles in its calculations. See *Chōshū isho shūsei*, vol. 5, 884 (Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92).
- 16 *Hanshu* 75.3172 (biog. of Yi Feng).
- 17 *Hanshu* 85.3468 (biog. of Gu Yong).
- 18 The tone and reception of Gu’s memorial are but two of many pieces of evidence that should cause thoughtful historians of China to rethink the common wisdom equating emperors with autocrats.
- 19 This text of Gu Yong’s memorial is translated from *Hanshu* 85.3465–72. Gu’s biography (*Hanshu* 85.3443–73) is joined with that of Du Ye (ibid., 85.3473–79), who was also a Chang’an native and official at Chengdi’s court. In 12 BCE Gu Yong was serving as Governor of Beidi. There had been more disasters and anomalies than usual, including the appearance of Halley’s Comet. Chunyu Zhang was sent to ask for any comment Gu Yong might care to make regarding these strange events. The memorial translated here is Gu Yong’s reply, which supposedly “moved” Chengdi “very much.” The translation was prepared by Michael Nylan, with the assistance of Michael Loewe.

The term *shiyi* usually refers to “picking up what has been left behind.” But in Tang times, it was used to designate the counsellors to the emperor. Only the latter sense seems to work here.

- 20 That is, would-be advisers of low rank such as Gu Yong himself.
- 21 Often translated as “Scribe” or “Recorder,” the term clearly refers to “diviners” in the Shuihudi and Zhangjiashan excavated manuscripts (terminus ad quem ca. 228 BCE and 186 BCE, respectively), as well as in many *Zuozhuan* passages. Diviner Yu was an officer in Wei, a contemporary of Qu Boyu and Mi Zixia. The location is identified as a side hall in *Hou Hanshu* 109.8A, but several other texts have Bei Tang (North Hall), suggesting the room behind the main throne room.
- 22 Diviner Yu is celebrated in *Analects* 15/7. This story appears in the *Han Shi waizhuan*, *juan* 7, but not in the *Zuozhuan*, as one might expect.
- 23 See *Shiji* 112.295, 120.3105. Ji An, a sharp critic of Gongsun Hong, tried to warn Li Xi about Zhang Tang’s deceitful nature; Ji advised Li to speak out against Zhang, rather than leaving it too late to protest. Li was eventually punished for failing to curb Zhang, after Zhang’s fall in 115 BCE. One wonders if Gu Yong was not inspired by Ji An’s record as Governor in Donghai (as Gu’s appointment was also as governor), as well as by Ji’s integrity at court.
- 24 This is a reference to the “Kang wang zhi gao” chapter of the *Documents* (para. 1), a commission to border officials, which appears in the present text with a different negative (*wang* 罔) replacing the *wu* found in the *Hanshu*.
- 25 Ode 255, verse 1; cf. Ode 245, trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 505.
- 26 Probably this refers to the three months that start the calendar under the Three Dispensations; it may also, however, refer to the promulgation of the Triple Concordance (San Tong) calendar, for which see Cullen’s chapter in Nyman and Loewe 2010.
- 27 Note the use of the same term “San Tong” to name a calendar and to refer also to the “three rules” that would begin the calendar under one of three successive months under different legitimate dynasties. Both uses signal the cyclical nature of legitimate rule, which has the Xia dynasty calendar starting with the tenth month, and so on. By traditional reckoning, the earliest reference to this San Tong is *Chunqiu fanlu*, *juan* 7, *pian* 23, ascribed to Dong Zhongshu (mid–Western Han); but possibly earlier is Fu Sheng’s (early Western Han) *Shangshu dazhuan*, *juan* 3, commenting on the “Gan shi” (“Oath of Gan”) chapter in the *Documents*. There are problems, however, as the dating of parts of the first text postdate Eastern Han and the second text has been heavily edited by activist compilers. The earliest reference in the classics to the San Zheng appears in the same “Gan shi” chapter.
- 28 This is a reference to Ode 246, verse 1 (“Xing wei”), trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 472: “In thick patches are those rushes, springing up by the wayside / . . . They will burst up everywhere, be transformed everywhere, / With their leaves so soft and glossy.”
- 29 From Jing Fang (2) (in *Biographical Dictionary*). See Gao Huaimin 1970 for the assignment of various hexagrams to the fifteen-day units of *qi* throughout the calendar year.
- 30 A possible reference to the *Documents* “Hong fan” chapter, which lists Five Guidelines and Five Surveys instead, as phenomena to be watched for the signs they yield regarding various changes, including changes in climate and weather.
- 31 Gu here alludes, of course, to himself, as he feels in virtual exile from the court.
- 32 Following Otake 1979.
- 33 Ode 241 (“Huang yi”), trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 449 (modified): “He turned His kind regards on the west / And there gave a manor to him.”
- 34 Literally, the “weak” (*ruo*), but both Otake 1979 and Morohashi 1957–60 think this refers to those who neglect their duties in an irresponsible fashion.
- 35 Meaning, people thought the Han was approaching the time when 210 years (3×7×10) would be over, and its dynastic rule would elapse. This comment may simultaneously refer to the fact that Chengdi himself had been on the throne a total of 21 years when the memorial was sent. This would double the predictors for misfortune, with the waning nine inauspicious as well.

- 36 As Wang Xianqian says, the Three Troubles were the three most dangerous points in the cycles of Three Times Seven, the Hexagram-*qi* cycle, and in the dynastic cycle (it being the 106th year). See *Hanshu buzhu* 85.16a.
- 37 This may refer to the fact that some troubles result from the times being at critical junctures in the cosmic cycles and some from misconduct by those in power.
- 38 This passage is the locus classicus for the phrase *liu yun*. Usually these are identified as meteorites, but they could conceivably be asteroids. See Needham 1959, vol. 3, 433.
- 39 This material in brackets comes from assertions made below in the memorial.
- 40 Literally, “the period will not last long,” but the particle *jue*, as in *Documents* usage, almost certainly signifies “his” in reference to a superior (signifying here the emperor).
- 41 Literally, “be able to rescue the state,” or “the ruling line,” or “the people” (or all of the above).
- 42 For Zheng Shu of Chenxia, see the *Chunqiu*, Lord Xuan, Year 10, where the “men of Chu” kill him, on account of his flagrant misconduct at the court of Lord Ling of Chen (detailing events of 597 BCE). For Cui Shu of Qi, see Lord Xiang, Year 24, in *Zuo* 9.24 (detailing events of 548 BCE).
- 43 Fan Bing, styling himself a “General,” was a contemporary of Gu Yong. A native of Weishi (Henan Province), Fan led thirteen people in an uprising in Chenliu in 14 BCE, in which they attacked the offices of the Governor, killed him, and kidnapped some of the local officials. The uprising was put down by Li Tan, who was then given a noble title. Su Ling, also in 14 BCE, led what is often referred to as a “revolt by the iron monopoly workers” in Shanyang (present-day Shandong), only eight years after a similar revolt at the Yingchuan iron monopoly offices. As Chen Sheng and Xiang Liang were rebel leaders during the Qin–Han transition, mentioning these two figures is a veiled reference to a possible dynastic transfer.
- 44 I presume a *mang jiao* refers to a “sharp/pointed corner,” but texts clearly state that, whenever a major planet or constellation produces this kind of a trail (if trail it is), it constitutes an “inauspicious” sign portending war. Since Mars itself signifies war, that Mars would produce this extra sign is doubly inauspicious.
- 45 As Michael Loewe (personal communication, April 20, 2012) has pointed out, this is the only passage in the entire corpus of extant texts dating to the two hundred years of Western Han to accuse a group of eunuchs (instead of a single imperial favorite) of inappropriately arrogating privileges to itself at the expense of the ruling house.
- 46 Clearly, the contrast will be between “near” and “far” (intimate and not). This may refer to Chengdi’s bed and drinking partners, or to the eunuchs and women who are of low rank.
- 47 The *Qian Hanji* has a slightly different text, which reads, “At audiences of the court, depart only when the carriage is properly fitted out”; or, as Odake 1979 reads it, “Only when the laws have been issued should you go out driving in your carriage.”
- 48 Literally, the “sprouts,” referring to the first signs of trouble.
- 49 Following Meng Kang’s (180–260 CE) commentary (*Hanshu* 85.3471n1), “lesser” would refer to “officials” and “greater” to “the ruler.” But Meng’s identification of “great” and “small” may be incorrect. Meng continues: “When a famine occurs, the ruler ought to open the granaries to rescue the common people, and when he is, to the contrary, mean and stingy, then this will prove a disaster for him. But if a subordinate is [personally?] close with his money, it is auspicious.”
- 50 Taking *jue* as meaning “the superior’s” (as is usual in the the *Documents*). See n. 40. According to Yan Shigu’s commentary (*Hanshu* 85.3471n2), these words come from the “Hong fan” traditions. Qian Daxin (1728–1804 CE), quoted in *Hanshu buzhu* 85.17b, says that Yan Shigu is wrong, since these words come from Jing Fang’s commentary to the *Yijing*; but Jing’s work may in earlier times have been construed as such a tradition. See *Hanshu* 27B(A).1401, which concerns the portent of the inexplicable disappearance of a lock or bolt of the city gates, with

- Gu Yong's comment. *Hanshu buzhu* 85.17b also cites Shen Qinhan (1775–1832 CE) as arguing that the citation of the “ominous talk” (*yao ci*) is from the lost work entitled *Yaozhan* by Jing Fang the Elder.
- 51 See *Hanshu* 85.3472n8 for this translation. Alternately, this refers to making even more demands on his subjects in the form of taxes and levies.
- 52 Both of these are implied by the single term *ye*.
- 53 Ru Chun's note (*Hanshu* 85.3471n7) says, “They want to enter [the passes] to get cheap grain.” This (and the second reference immediately below) are two of the very few surviving clues confirming that some version of the “Ever-Normal Granary” policy (meant to adjust the prices of basic necessities in the commanderies and frontier zones) was still in force. Many scholars have presumed that this policy had been abandoned by now.
- 54 While Morohashi 1957–60 supports the reading of *jing* as “classics” here, the term likely just refers to the accepted moralities or norms.
- 55 The Morohashi dictionary says “fill with earth” and associates it with paving.
- 56 Mao Ode 35, verse 4 (“Gu feng”/“Valley Wind”), trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 55 (wording differs slightly there). This precise wording appears in *Liji*, “Tangong, xia” (chap. 4, para. 67), where it is ascribed to the *Odes*. The whole ode is about a husband and wife being parted, against their wills. Perhaps not coincidentally, this ode and others in the same Bei subsection refer to the Chang'an area, with its Wei and Jing Rivers.
- 57 *Analects* 12/9, trans. Waley 1938, 165.
- 58 As to the Taiguan (Director of Provisions) and Dao Guan (Director of Grain Selection), both these officials had the responsibility of looking after the needs of the emperor and his palace. See *Hanshu* 19A.731; Bielenstein 1980, 51.
- 59 See n. 3 above.
- 60 Precisely 210 years passed from the beginning of Han to the death of Pingdi. Wang Mang mentioned the Three Times Seven theory no fewer than four times in an edict, in order to prove that the end of Western Han was fated and thus it was proper for the Wang clan to take power. See *Hanshu* 84.798, 99A.4093–94, 4108–9, 4112–13.
- 61 The text of the Qi version of the *Odes* is lost, and only fragments of the interpretations once associated with that version have been transmitted. Scholarly arguments usually refer to the *Hanshu* biography of Yi Feng and the apocryphal text(s) entitled the *Shiwei*. See *Qi shi Yi shi xue* 2002.
- 62 The sexagesimal cycle used to mark years, months, and days is formed by combining Ten (Heavenly) Stems and Twelve (Earthly) Branches. Each term in the sexagesimal cycle consists of two Chinese characters, the first representing a term from a cycle of ten known as the Heavenly Stems (Tian Gan) and the second from a cycle of twelve known as the Earthly Branches (Di Zhi). The first term (*jiazi*) combines the first heavenly stem (*jia*) with the first earthly branch (*zi*). The second (*yichou*) combines the second stem with the second branch. This continues, generating a total of sixty different terms (the least-common multiple of ten and twelve), after which the cycle repeats itself.
- 63 This is based on Lang Yi's unambiguous statement assigning Earthly Branches to these dates. Lang presumes that in 134 CE, the next year, the Han throne would “enter the final decade” (*ji*). Li Xian's commentary, quoted in *Hou Hanshu* 30B.1065, glosses *ji* 基 as *qi* 朞 (full period), so it must point to the cycle of *meng-zhong-ji*.
- 64 *Hou Hanshu* 30B.1065.
- 65 *Hou Hanshu* 30B.1065, 1066n2.
- 66 Lang Yi's proposals urged that a change be made in the starting date for the calendar (an implicit acknowledgment that a new dynastic, as opposed to calendrical, cycle had begun); his proposals were offered in hopes that the cycle might begin again, thereby “renewing” the Mandate for the Han ruling house.

- 67 Mao Odes 236, 162, 171, 182, trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 432, 247, 270, 294. “Da ming” comes from the “Daya” section of the *Odes*. “Simu,” “Jia yu,” and “Hong yan” are in the “Xiaoya” section. It may be significant that none of these four appears in either the “Airs of the States” (“Guofeng”) or “Hymns” (“Song”) sections of the *Odes*.
- 68 Tan Dexing 2000, 54; Cao Jianguo 2006, 437.
- 69 *Hanshu* 75.3173. The commentary notes Meng Kang’s citation of the text *Shi nei zhuan* (*Inner Traditions to the Odes*).
- 70 Mao Odes 166, 185, 178, 193, 236, trans. Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 255, 284, 236, 320, 427. The Earthly Branches associated with these poems, except for “Shi yue zhi jiao,” are seen in a citation of *Fan li shu*, in Kong Yingda’s commentary to Mao Ode 1 (“Guan ju”). See *Maoshi zhushu*, *juan* 1, 19. The association of Xu with “Shi yue zhi jiao” is noted in *Qi shi Yi shi xue* 2002, *ce* 16, *juan* 848/1a–2b.
- 71 Tan Dexing 2000, 55.
- 72 *Qi shi Yi shi xue* 2002, *ce* 16.
- 73 As the *Changes* apocrypha entitled *Yi wei kun ling tu*, says, “At the conjunctions of Mao and You, the changeover (*suo ge zhe*) is less critical, whereas the conjunctions of Wu and Hai . . . mark a dynastic change (*geng zhi zhe*) that is more profound.” See *Chōshū isho shūsei*, vol. 1B, 313 (Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92).
- 74 Hai, correlated with the tenth month, marked the death of myriad things and the apex of yin; at the same time Hai also functioned as the “seed” (*he*) or beginning of yang, correlated with hexagram 1 (Qian). The apocrypha to the *Odes* entitled *Shi fan li shu* says, “Whenever we extrapolate the calculations so as to generate predictions, they must always begin from the second period (*zhong*) of Hai . . . The myriad things die and are reborn. It is the beginning of the Great Unity (Da Tong).” See *Hou Han shu* 30B.1065 (biog. of Lang Yi), *Shi fan li shu*, cited in Li Xian’s commentary.
- 75 *Hou Hanshu* 30.1048–49 (biog. of Yang Hou).
- 76 The term “essence of yellow” is explained as an allusion to those who served and supported Shun, the exemplary mythical ruler who followed Yao. Shun had been blessed by the virtue of yellow, or Earth; his predecessor ruled under the aegis of red, or Fire. Wang Mang, only emperor of the Xin dynasty (9–23 CE), had traced his claim to rule to Shun. Elevation of those who apparently served Shun would thus endanger the house of Han, according to the Five Powers cycle theory.
- 77 *Hou Hanshu* 57.1852 (biog. of Li Yun).
- 78 *Hanshu* 31.1796, 85.3468. Hexagram 25 is also translated as “Unexpected” or “Disastrous.”
- 79 The modern scholar Zheng Fu essentially equated the Hexagram Cycle at Wuwang with the Nine Yang theory. But the biography of Gu Yong places the two theories in different categories (*yi ke*) within the Three Troubles (San Nan) theory. Each was clearly a different concept, in my view. See Zheng Fu 2000, 139.
- 80 *Hanshu* 99B.4131. See *Hanshu buzhu* 99B.21a for extended commentary on this passage.
- 81 See *Hanshu buzhu* 99B.4121 (biog. of Wang Mang) for Qian Daxin’s comments.
- 82 Translations of lines from the *Yijing* follow, with some changes, those in Lynn 1994. This citation is from the “Xiang” (what Wilhelm and Baynes 1967 calls the “Images”).
- 83 Or, “Conforming [with the good] and brilliance come from Great Brightness.”
- 84 *Hou Hanshu* 30.1045 (biog. of Su Jing).
- 85 One helpful guide to this theory is Gao Huaimin 1970, 140–47. In this theory, Dui and Kun signified two of the Eight Palaces (or “rulers”) of the sixty-four hexagrams in the *Yijing*. See also the new book on Jing Fang’s theories, Guo Yu 2007.
- 86 Editors’ note: Both king and queen ruled equally over the others; this has significance for gender studies.

- 87 *Hanshu* 85.3467, 3473.
- 88 By these Hexagram-*qi* theories (which later scholars ascribed to Meng Xi, though they may well derive from one of the two Jing Fangs), the 384 Line Texts in the 64 hexagrams (6 per hexagram) correspond to (in descending order of importance) the 4 seasons, 12 months, 24 *qi* periods (each 15 days long), the 72 *hou* (divisions of the 24 *qi* periods), and the 365 individual days of the year, by a complicated series of formulae.
- 89 See Liang Weixuan 2007.
- 90 The phrase “Jianhou” appears twice in the *Yijing*, with hexagrams 3 and 16 (Dun and Yu). For more on Jing’s Jianhou theory, which employs the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches in relation to the Eight Trigrams, see Guo Yu 2007, 49–61, including the helpful charts on 55–58, 59–61.
- 91 Liu Yujian 1997, 278.
- 92 Guo Yu 2007, 62.
- 93 Zhong Zhaopeng 1995; Lin Zhongjun 2002, 10.
- 94 See *Yi wei Qian jian du*, cited in *Chōshū isho shūsei*, vol. 1A, 34–36 (Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92).
- 95 See *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng, juan 7*, 183–213 (“San dai gai zhi zhi wen”) (Su Yu 1992). Sometimes the “point of origin” refers to the start of the dynasty, sometimes to the start of historical time.
- 96 *Hanshu* 21A.988nn24–26 clearly understand these as days.
- 97 *Hanshu* 21A.984–85.
- 98 Editors’ note: Nylan’s chapter entitled “Yin-Yang, Five Phases, and Qi,” in Nylan and Loewe 2010, 398–408, argues that this is because Five Phases theory had yet to come into its own in Dong’s era.
- 99 NB: The Triple Concordance cycle refers to a calendrical cycle; it is not the same thing as the Three Governors theory ascribed to Dong Zhongshu, though both have “three” in their titles. That the two systems coincided is considered portentous. See nn. 9 and 26 above.
- 100 The Huangzhong, or Yellow Bell, fulfilled at least two functions in Han literature: first, as the largest of the twelve pitch pipes by which the progress of the cosmic energies and their associated changes could be measured; and second, as the derivation of linear and other measurements. See *Hanshu* 21A.966, 967, 969.
- 101 Cf. Yang Xiong’s use of 81 (9×9) in his famous *Taixuan jing*.
- 102 Cullen 2010, 325, says, regarding the Quarter Remainder (Si Fen): “one of the most basic elements of which is that, in the course of a ‘Rule’ of nineteen years, seven intercalary months should be inserted, so that those nineteen years contained a total of 19×12 plus 7 months.”
- 103 *Hanshu* 21B.991.
- 104 For example, droughts were yang disasters, while floods were yin disasters.
- 105 *Hanshu* 21A.984.
- 106 This is the best explanation of the phrase “Nine Yang.”
- 107 *Hanshu* 21A.987 (see commentary by Meng Kang).
- 108 Lynn 1994, 19–21.
- 109 See *Hanshu* 21A.986–87nn. 9–14.
- 110 This was Meng Kang’s interpretation, noted in *Hanshu* 21A.986–87, “Treatise on the Pitch Pipes and Calendar.”
- 111 104 BCE (or possibly late 105 BCE, according to Cullen 2010) was seen as the moment when Han had fully taken over from the previous Zhou dynasty, in the Xia mode, and hence that date represented the start of a new Yuan (Origin).
- 112 For some of these disasters, see Dubs 1938–55, vol. 3, 318. The disasters included locusts and severe flooding along the banks of the Yellow River. Contrary to predictions, we do not hear of severe droughts.

- 113 *Hanshu* 99B.4131–42, 99C.4161–75 (biog. of Wang Mang), 24A.1145 (“Treatise on Food and Money”).
- 114 That students of the classical era must reconceive many events, taking into account the pervasiveness of theories positing these mutual sympathies, and thus abandon our habitual analytical reliance on cause-and-effect models, is a lesson brought home by Daryn Lehoux’s 2012 book on Roman science.

The Politics of Omenology in Chengdi's Reign

Shao-yun Yang 楊劭允

MORE THAN SIXTY YEARS AGO, WESTERN SINOLOGISTS BEGAN TO address an important question: why were many more ominous portents (i.e., bad omens) reported in certain Han reigns than in others? A typical Han classicist's answer would have been relatively simple: bad omens appeared in times of bad government, as Heaven's warning to the emperor that disaster was imminent if he did not change his ways. There was no reason, therefore, for bad omens to occur under a good emperor; such an emperor would instead receive auspicious omens as signs of Heaven's approval.¹ These theoretical foundations for omenology are expressed succinctly at the beginning of an edict issued by Chengdi in 29 BCE, in response to a solar eclipse and an earthquake occurring on the same day (January 5): "We have heard that Heaven gives life to the people but cannot itself govern them, and therefore it establishes rulers to govern and administer them. When the way of rulership is attained, then the grass and trees and insects are all in their proper place. But when the ruler of men is not virtuous, Heaven's reprimand is manifested in the heavens and the earth, and ominous portents arise one after the other, as warnings against misgovernment."²

In 1950 Hans Bielenstein formulated a new model for explaining the varying frequency of bad omens in Western Han—one that did not require belief in Heaven. Bielenstein later extended this model to Eastern Han. Assuming that the strange phenomena interpreted as omens actually appeared regularly, Bielenstein argued that what differed from one reign to another was not how frequently omens occurred but rather how frequently they were *reported* to the emperor by officials at court.³ According to

Bielenstein, reporting an omen was a relatively indirect, therefore safe, way for officials, especially those in the capital, to criticize those in power, including “the emperor (or empress dowager) and his court, his relatives, high officials in his confidence, or a faction in power.”⁴ A larger number of reported omens thus indicated a higher level of discontent in the imperial court: “In practice calamities became portents only when they were memorialized as such, and it was for the officials to decide whether the Emperor should be informed or not. Consequently, as long as the officials were more or less content with the government, the number of memorialized portents was low. If on the other hand there was cause for criticism, they could select a calamity which seemed suitable and then memorialize it.”⁵

Bielenstein argued that larger numbers of omens corresponded to periods when emperors or other powerful figures at court were much disliked by the officials.⁶ For example, he claimed that the officials of Chengdi’s court used omen reports to criticize him indirectly for self-indulgence, pleasure seeking, and entrusting state affairs to his maternal uncles from the Wang family. By adding up the number of portents in each emperor’s reign, as recorded in the *Basic Annals* and “Treatises” of the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), and dividing those totals by the number of years in each reign, Bielenstein calculated an average of 2.2 omens a year during Chengdi’s reign—albeit without counting records of solar eclipses, which during Han were considered among the most ominous portents.⁷ In 1984 Bielenstein revised this average upward to three omens a year, probably by adding in the recorded solar eclipses. Such a high ratio, unprecedented in Western Han, was only surpassed by the average for Chengdi’s successor, Aidi (r. 7–1 BCE).

This chapter uses other information in the *Hanshu*, especially the biographies, to reassess the applicability of Bielenstein’s model to Chengdi’s reign, building upon arguments made by Wolfram Eberhard in 1957 and Martin Kern in 2000, both of whom criticized Bielenstein for not assessing fluctuations in the frequency of omens *within* a reign. Eberhard’s method was to trace such fluctuations by counting omens in five-year blocks from the first year of Western Han to the last, rather than emperor by emperor. According to Eberhard’s count for the years roughly corresponding to Chengdi’s reign—the periods 35–26 and 20–11 BCE, each comprising two five-year blocks—the omens reported increased significantly. Eberhard argued that these peaks “belong[ed] together” and expressed criticism against the Wang family and Zhao Feiyan (d. 1 BCE), who became Chengdi’s second empress in 16 BCE.⁸ This interpretation, however, suffers from the same statistical flaw that Eberhard criticized Bielenstein for, as it makes no attempt to explain the marked decrease in omens during the years 25–21 BCE.

Eberhard also argued that in many cases omens “could, at the time they happened, be used as a political tool by one faction at court against another faction.”⁹ This went beyond Bielenstein’s understanding of “indirect criticism,” as it implied that court officials attacked their political enemies by explicitly blaming them for recently reported omens. Although Eberhard cited only one example—Liu Xiang’s (79/78–8 BCE) use of an omen to attack the eunuch Palace Writers during Yuandi’s reign (48–33 BCE)—the

example was “very revealing in this respect.”¹⁰ That omen was an earthquake in 47 BCE. In the political conflict at that time, between Liu Xiang’s faction and the Palace Writers, the interpretation of this omen could have been used as a weapon by either side. Liu Xiang moved first, submitting a memorial under a maternal relative’s name in the hope of avoiding reprisals from the Palace Writers. But the directness of his interpretation, attributing the earthquake to the iniquities of the Palace Writers, immediately led them to suspect that the memorial came from his hand. They had Liu Xiang arrested and dismissed from office on the charge of joining in a factional conspiracy to seize control of the government.¹¹

Unlike Eberhard, Kern focused on tracing omenological trends over a single, exceptionally long reign, that of Wudi (141–87 BCE). In the process, he provided additional support for Eberhard’s argument that “the explanation of the meaning of a phenomenon at the time it happened was in some cases different from the explanation given by a later historian,” presumably for two reasons: later historians had both the benefit of hindsight and a different political agenda when deciding the reading for a particular omen.¹² In particular, Kern found that numerous portents interpreted as auspicious by Wudi and his court, for the purpose of legitimating his policies, were retrospectively reread as ominous because of classicists’ negative assessment of his reign.¹³ Therefore reported and recorded omens cannot simply be converted into statistics that measure levels of discontent at court without taking into account the multiple contexts and histories of such portents’ interpretation. Based on this, Kern argued that Bielenstein’s model is only valid for *late* Western Han, when emperors like Chengdi were unable to prevent omens from being used to criticize them because of the increased authority accorded the classics, which meant that men who could wield these texts in omen readings were more powerful vis-à-vis the emperor. As evidence, Kern cited Chengdi’s numerous edicts “acknowledging and bewailing the lack of virtue that had been relentlessly proven by the continuously swelling stream of omen observations,” although Kern also raised the possibility that this was “a new imperial rhetoric” rather than an expression of Chengdi’s genuine sentiments.¹⁴

These approaches may be improved upon in five ways. First, instead of comparing omen numbers in arbitrary units of five- or ten-year blocks, we may divide Chengdi’s reign into four phases of varying lengths, according to the changing political *context* that influenced how omen interpretation was deployed. Anomalous events became relevant to politics only when explicitly *interpreted* as politically significant, though any such event could be reported to the court as a possible omen. Omen reports with no known interpretation during Chengdi’s reign therefore have little or no influence on the analysis of political context. Although this interpretation-centered approach shifts the focus away from the question of numbers, it better illuminates the reason behind the “peak” of omens reported for 35–26 BCE.¹⁵

Second, contrary to Kern’s—and to some extent Bielenstein’s—assumption that the primary aim of late Western Han omen interpretation was to criticize the emperor, this

chapter argues that, in the first decade of Chengdi's reign (here dubbed Phase 1), omenology was mainly used by members and partisans of the Wang family to turn Chengdi against their political rivals, and vice versa.

Third, it is apparent that on the two occasions when omens were indeed used to criticize Chengdi (in Phases 2 and 3, through 15 BCE and then through early 12 BCE, respectively), he responded with mixed skepticism and anger rather than the self-flagellating attitude adopted in the rhetoric of his edicts. The reason was that this criticism originated from within the Wang family circle, whose members Chengdi no longer trusted but could not remove from power, lest he cause distress to his mother, Empress Dowager Wang. Arguably, then, the politics of omenology during Chengdi's reign more often reflects an emperor's unwillingness to use his power against his maternal kin, rather than the omen interpreters' ability to exert greater power over the emperor.

Fourth, as shown below, the politics of omenology was not confined to the factions and classicists of the imperial court in Chang'an. In 14–12 BCE (during Phase 3), junior officials and commoners elsewhere in the empire were prepared to express their disgruntlement with the central government by interpreting, as well as reporting, omens as critiques of those in power, even at the risk of persecution and death.

Finally, fifth, the Bielenstein, Eberhard, and Kern studies cited above tend to emphasize the political uses of omens while underplaying questions of belief. Because omen interpreters like Liu Xiang were willing to use omens as political weapons, Eberhard in particular registered his suspicion that officials did not really believe in omens at all.¹⁶ By contrast, we will see that during the last five years of Chengdi's reign (Phase 4), both the Wang family faction and Liu Xiang turned their attention to the eschatological aspects of omenology, rooted in beliefs about cosmic cycles, in large part because they feared that the Han dynasty's destruction was imminent.

Phase 1, 32–Late 24 BCE: Omens as Weapons in Factional Conflicts

Phase 1 effectively began soon after Chengdi's accession in 33 BCE, in the summer of 32 BCE, after a reddish-yellow dust storm blanketed Chang'an for an entire day and night (Table 12.01).¹⁷ In response to Chengdi's request for interpretations regarding this unusual event, the Advisory Counsellor Yang Xing and the Academician Si Sheng both claimed that the dust storm and a comet sighted that same spring were warnings that Chengdi's actions had disrupted the dynasty's balance of yin and yang; specifically, the emperor's award of noble titles to his five maternal uncles, brothers of Empress Dowager Wang (71 BCE–13 CE), came under fire.¹⁸ These readings were prompted less by dismay over the ennoblement of the Wang brothers than by the sudden elevation, upon Chengdi's accession, of the eldest Wang brother, Wang Feng (d. 22 BCE), to the powerful position of Marshal of State (Da Sima) and General-in-Chief with Authority over the Secretariat (Da Jiangjun Ling Shangshu Shi).¹⁹ Wang Feng had not been among the five Wangs ennobled by Chengdi, as he had inherited his noble rank as Noble of Yang-

TABLE 12.01 Phases in Western Han omenology

Phase 1, 32–late 24 BCE: Omens as weapons in factional conflicts					
YEAR(S)	OMENS	INTERPRETERS	FACTION/AGENDA	INTERPRETATIONS	EFFECTIVE?
32 BCE	Comet and dust storm	Yang Xing and Si Sheng	Probably the Xu family faction	Blaming Wang Feng and his brothers	No
29 BCE	Solar eclipse and earthquake	Not named	Unknown	Blaming Kuang Heng	Yes
29 BCE	Solar eclipse and earthquake	Not named	Unknown	Blaming eunuch Palace Writers	Yes
29–28 BCE	Two solar eclipses; earthquake; at least ten other omens 35–28 BCE	Du Qin and Gu Yong	Wang family faction (hereafter “Wang faction”)	Blaming Empress Xu and Xu family	Yes
29–28 BCE	Some or all of the omens used by Du Qin and Gu Yong	Liu Xiang	Unclear	Blaming Empress Xu and Xu family	Yes
26–24 BCE	Three solar eclipses	Gu Yong	Wang faction	Blaming Empress Xu and Xu family	No
25 BCE	Solar eclipse	Zhang Kuang	Wang faction	Blaming Wang Shang	Yes
24 BCE	Solar eclipse	Wang Feng	Wang faction	Blaming Liu Kang	Yes
24 BCE	Solar eclipse	Wang Zhang	Anti-Wang agenda	Blaming Wang Feng	Nearly
ca. 24 BCE	Numerous historical omens	Liu Xiang	Anti-Wang agenda	Various, all aimed at persuading Chengdi to remove Wang faction from power	No
Phase 2, Late 24–early 15 BCE: Omen reports generally not read in political terms					
19 BCE	Flock of pheasants appears in Chang’an, perches on the roof of a hall in Weiyang Palace	Wang Yin (who staged the omen) and some other ministers	Wang faction	Blaming Chengdi’s incognito excursions	No: Chengdi discovers omen was staged
Phase 3, Early 15–early 12 BCE: Wangs use omens to criticize Chengdi and Zhang Fang; those outside the court use omens to criticize Wangs					
16–15 BCE	Black dragon sighted; two solar eclipses; meteor shower	Gu Yong	Wang faction	Blaming Chengdi’s incognito excursions, mausoleum projects, and favored consorts	No
15 BCE	Same as above	Leaders of Wang faction	Wang faction	Blaming Zhang Fang	Yes
14–12 BCE	Three solar eclipses; floods; various earlier omens	Junior officials and commoners, including Mei Fu	Anti-Wang agenda	Blaming Wang faction	Nearly
Phase 4, Early 12–7 BCE: Growing interest in omen-based eschatology					
12 BCE	Solar eclipse; meteor shower; Halley’s Comet; various recent and earlier omens	Gu Yong	Wang faction	Warns of future plots and rebellions due to cosmic cycles; proposes various preventive measures	Partially: Chengdi is “deeply moved” but takes no action
10 BCE	Landslide in the Min Mountains plus Halley’s Comet from 12 BCE	Liu Xiang	Anti-Wang agenda	Warns of the end of Han dynasty; possibly proposes strengthening imperial clan and weakening Wang family	No
ca. 10 BCE	Various earlier omens	Li Xun	Wang faction	Warns Wang Gen of future floods; proposes various preventive measures	Partially: convinces Wang Gen but not Chengdi
7 BCE	Mars “guarding” the constellation Heart (Scorpio)	Li Xun and Bi Li (who apparently faked their astronomical readings)	Unclear; possibly Wang Mang	Warns of Chengdi’s imminent death; proposes Zhai Fangjin as a scapegoat to avert it	Yes: Zhai commits suicide; Chengdi dies anyway

ping from his father in 42 BCE. But Wang Feng quickly wrote a memorial to Chengdi, assuming sole responsibility for the portents. He then requested permission to resign from his new position, making no mention of his or his brothers' noble titles.²⁰

Yang Xing, Si Sheng, and the many officials at court who concurred in their assessment of the omens were probably clients or allies of Xu Jia (d. 28 BCE), father of Chengdi's first empress. Xu Jia had held the rank of Marshal of State and General of Chariots and Cavalry (*Juji Jiangjun*) since 41 BCE, and he and Wang Feng were now the two most influential ministers at court, given the recent downfall of the former Director of Palace Writers, Shi Xian (d. 32 BCE), who had been the dominant political figure at the court of Chengdi's father, Yuandi.²¹ Presumably, the Xu family and their supporters had hoped to fill the power vacuum left by Shi Xian's fall, and therefore objected to the elevation of Wang Feng to a rank equal to Xu Jia's. Chengdi refused to accept Wang Feng's resignation, blaming his own lack of experience and wisdom for the bad portents. But for the next two years, Wang Feng carefully maintained an outward attitude of respect and deference toward Xu Jia, on the advice of his chief political strategist, Du Qin. This strategy paid off in the autumn of 30 BCE, when Chengdi retired Xu Jia from his post, thereby strengthening Wang Feng's position in the imperial court.²²

Wang Feng soon afterward initiated his own omenological assault on Xu Jia's daughter, Empress Xu (d. 8 BCE), with the aim of gradually undermining Chengdi's exceptionally strong devotion to her. As mentioned earlier, on January 5, 29 BCE, Chang'an was darkened by a solar eclipse and then shaken at night by an earthquake. Chengdi again blamed himself for these portents and ordered his nobles and high officials to recommend men who could interpret them accurately and honestly.²³ The memorials that began to arrive seem to have been more interested in identifying scapegoats and settling political scores than in criticizing Chengdi himself. Within a month of the eclipse and earthquake, unnamed interpreters sought to link these portents to Chancellor Kuang Heng and the eunuch Palace Writers previously led by Shi Xian; this was old business for Chengdi's court, since the political fortunes of both Kuang Heng and the Palace Writers had declined significantly since Chengdi's accession to the throne. Kuang's reputation, in particular, had been irreparably tarnished by his sons' unlawful conduct and by the discovery that, between 32 BCE and 30 BCE, he had abused his power to cover up a cartographical error that enlarged his fief. Chengdi therefore dismissed both Kuang and the Palace Writers from office without hesitation, but he remained open to alternative interpretations of the recent omens.²⁴

In the summer of 29 BCE, Chengdi personally examined some twenty recommended omen interpretations, and he became convinced by Du Qin and Gu Yong (d. ca. 8 BCE)—both supporters of Wang Feng—that Empress Xu was herself to blame for the solar eclipse and earthquake.²⁵ Thus far the empress had been incapable of bearing children healthy enough to survive infancy, and she was now criticized for monopolizing Chengdi's affection and thereby selfishly preventing him from siring an heir by another woman.²⁶ Some other interpreters, possibly supporters of the Xu family, sought

to pin the blame for the portents squarely on Wang Feng; but Gu Yong managed to persuade Chengdi that the Wang family was unimpeachably loyal to Chengdi and so could not possibly be at fault.²⁷

Chengdi initially took no action against Empress Xu, beyond having the memorials of Du Qin and Gu Yong shown to her and his other consorts.²⁸ Over the next year or so, however, Gu Yong seems to have collected more reports of past and current omens, and he interpreted them in such a way as to strengthen the case against the empress.²⁹ Empress Xu's *Hanshu* biography suggests that Liu Xiang was meanwhile engaged in much the same activity, but it fails to explain Liu's motivations. Possibly Liu Xiang was driven mainly by his desire to improve Chengdi's chances of siring an heir; but Liu may also have been influenced by his desire to retaliate against the Xu family, since some of its members had once joined with the Palace Writers to defeat Liu's faction during Yuandi's reign.³⁰ In any case, the omen-collecting efforts of Gu Yong and Liu Xiang probably account for the exceptionally large number of omen reports that Eberhard noted for 35–26 BCE but misinterpreted as reflecting hatred toward the Wang family.

After a solar eclipse occurred on June 19, 28 BCE, Chengdi initially issued an edict blaming himself. Only three days later, however, he justified a sharp reduction in the budget allotted for Empress Xu's palace on the explicit grounds that she was to blame for the eclipse, judging from nine retrospective portent readings for the period 32–28 BCE offered by Gu Yong and Liu Xiang.³¹ From this point on, the estrangement between Empress Xu and Chengdi grew markedly, while Chengdi's dependence on the Wang family grew all the stronger. After the summer of 27 BCE, Liu Xiang began to realize that the power concentrated in the Wang consort clan represented a threat to the ruling house, so he retroactively blamed the Wangs for the portents he had read earlier as heaven's warnings about Empress Xu.³² Following yet another solar eclipse on October 23, 26 BCE, Chengdi gave Liu Xiang the assignment to collate the books in the imperial library, perhaps partly to steer him away from an open clash with Wang Feng.³³ For nearly twenty years, from 26 BCE to 7 BCE, Liu Xiang ostensibly stayed out of politics to devote himself to scholarship. In reality, Liu used his privileged access to the closed imperial library to compile a comprehensive catalogue of omens from remote antiquity to recent times, whose readings he carefully crafted to convince Chengdi to remove the Wang consort family from political power.³⁴

By 26 BCE, Wang Feng's main rival at court was Wang Shang (d. 25 BCE), who had replaced Kuang Heng as Chancellor but, unlike Kuang, enjoyed Chengdi's respect and favor. This Wang Shang (not to be confused with Wang Feng's brother of the same name) was Chengdi's first cousin twice removed. As Chancellor he tried but failed to have a Governor related by marriage to Wang Feng dismissed on charges of incompetence. In the spring of 25 BCE Wang Feng retaliated, pressuring Chengdi to investigate Wang Shang for an alleged sexual impropriety, despite Chengdi's objection that a Chancellor's private life had no bearing upon his worth in high office. Wang Shang, intimidated by Wang Feng's slander, attempted to get his daughter admitted to Chengdi's

harem through a recommendation by Li Ping, a former palace maid who had recently become Chengdi's favorite. Wang Shang probably hoped that his daughter would gain Chengdi's favor and persuade him to call off the investigation. But a solar eclipse on April 18 gave Wang Feng the perfect opportunity to further allege—through his men, Zhang Kuang and Shi Dan (d. 13 BCE)—that Heaven was warning Chengdi about Wang Shang's overweening ambitions, his application to have his daughter entered into the back palaces but the latest symptom of his treasonous intent. Initially Chengdi, not fully convinced by this interpretation of the eclipse, ordered the case to be dropped. But under continuing pressure from Wang Feng, Chengdi finally dismissed Wang Shang from office. Wang Shang died three days later, probably by suicide.³⁵ Chengdi's former tutor Zhang Yu (d. 5 BCE), who had always taken pains to avoid incurring Wang Feng's enmity and was now even more inclined to cooperate with the Wang family, then succeeded Wang Shang as Chancellor.³⁶

In early 24 BCE, Chengdi was taken badly ill, and he decided that if he died without an heir, his successor should be his half brother Liu Kang, the King of Dingtao (d. 23 BCE), who happened to be in Chang'an right then, making his ritually mandated visit to the imperial court. Chengdi therefore refused to let Liu Kang leave Chang'an, even after he began to recover. Wang Feng saw Liu Kang as a potential threat, his animus probably compounded by Yuandi's preference, late in his reign, for Liu Kang's mother over the woman who eventually became Empress Dowager Wang; Yuandi had even contemplated naming Liu Kang as heir apparent. Therefore, Wang Feng claimed that another solar eclipse, on April 7, represented Heaven's warning against the King of Dingtao overstaying his visit in Chang'an. According to the *Hanshu*, Chengdi did not believe this interpretation; he became seriously displeased at what he now regarded as Wang Feng's persecution of both Wang Shang and Liu Kang. He reluctantly chose to send Liu Kang away, rather than stand up to Wang Feng, but his attitude toward his uncle became decidedly hostile.³⁷

The *Hanshu* suggests that Gu Yong—now playing it safe?—continued to blame the solar eclipses of 26, 25, and 24 BCE on the Xu family, rather than joining in attacks on either Wang Shang or Liu Kang.³⁸ Chengdi was no longer convinced by the former interpretation either, although his relationship with Empress Xu was by then damaged beyond repair. Just at that point Wang Zhang (d. 24/23 BCE)—no relation to either Wang Feng or Wang Shang—in his capacity as the Governor of the Capital, sent a sealed memorial (*feng shi*; i.e., a memorial that only the emperor was permitted to open and read) in which he argued that the real cause of the recent eclipse lay in Wang Feng's monopoly on power at the expense of the imperial authority. Chengdi's receptivity to Wang Zhang's reading of the eclipse may well have been aided by Liu Xiang's presentation of his omen catalogue about this time. In any case, Chengdi had several private audiences with Wang Zhang to discuss Wang's recommendation that the well-respected Governor of Langye, Feng Yewang, replace Wang Feng at court. Unfortunately, Wang Yin (d. 15 BCE), a Palace Attendant (Shizhong) and a cousin of Wang Feng, happened to eavesdrop on one of these conversations and reported its substance back to Wang Feng.³⁹

Wang Feng was caught by surprise. Wang Zhang owed his post to Wang Feng's recommendation; moreover, Zhang had shown no overt hostility toward him. Wang Feng wondered how he would be able to survive this blow politically, but Du Qin, his client, advised him to submit a poignant memorial (composed, most probably, by Du Qin himself) begging to resign his posts on grounds of severe illness. When the memorial was read to the empress dowager, she wept and refused to eat. All this proved too much for Chengdi, who was encouraged to recall how close he had been to his uncle since childhood. Accordingly, Chengdi relented and asked Wang Feng to withdraw his resignation, on the grounds that he, the emperor, was solely responsible for the ill portents. Wang Feng supposedly responded by continuing to insist on resigning (by artful design or out of genuine fear, we cannot know), but eventually Wang Feng was persuaded by Du Qin to remain in office.⁴⁰

The tables then turned on Wang Zhang with devastating swiftness. Chengdi (or, more likely, Wang Feng acting on Chengdi's authority) ordered the Secretariat to charge Zhang with lobbying for Feng Yewang; the Governor, as the maternal uncle of Chengdi's half brother, the King of Zhongshan, was technically ineligible for court office because of the potential conflict of interest. Wang Zhang was arrested and charged by the Commissioner of Trials with high treason. His death in prison that winter was widely deemed a case of murder. Other members of Zhang's family were exiled to the far south, and Wang Feng even saw to it that Feng Yewang was stripped of his post as Governor; after 24 BCE he never again held office.⁴¹

Phase 2, Late 24–Early 15 BCE: Omen Reports Generally Not Read in Political Terms

For his crucial role in defeating Wang Zhang, Wang Feng rewarded Wang Yin with the high post of Imperial Counsellor, second only to that of Chancellor. Two years later, in the autumn of 22 BCE, Wang Feng suffered a fatal illness. On his deathbed Wang Feng designated Yin to succeed him as Marshal of State, in part because he believed his own brothers unfit for high office.⁴² Phase 2 of Chengdi's reign, which extended from Wang Zhang's death late in 24 until Wang Yin's death in February of 15 BCE, forms a stark contrast to the intense politics of omenology in Phase 1. Throughout Phase 2, easily visible solar eclipses did not occur, but reports of more localized omens trickled into the imperial court from the commanderies at the relatively low average rate of about 1.75 omens every two years.⁴³ The *Hanshu* gives no indication, however, that the interpretation of these omens had any political impact on Chengdi's court during the nine years comprising Phase 2. The sighting of a black dragon in the autumn of 16 BCE assumed political significance retroactively, at the beginning of Phase 3. By the *Hanshu* account, three fires at symbolically significant locations in Chang'an during the three years from 18 to 16 BCE represented repeated warnings against the increased influence of Zhao Feiyan. Still, so far as we know, these fires did not figure in the contemporary discussions relating to Zhao's installation as empress; quite possibly they were not seen as ominous until after Chengdi's reign was over.⁴⁴

The main factors in the relative unimportance of omenology in court politics during Phase 2 are that resort to political omen interpretation had become, for the time being, more dangerous for members of the Wang family and less useful to their chief opponent, Liu Xiang. Although Chengdi had shown himself susceptible to omenological rhetoric when it came to Empress Xu, Wang Feng's relatively heavy-handed use of solar eclipses to undermine Wang Shang and Liu Kang, lacking corroboration from other omen experts such as Du Qin and Gu Yong, had rendered Chengdi increasingly suspicious of the motives of prominent members of the Wang family—so much so that he finally came to credit Wang Zhang's argument that the Wang consort clan was itself to blame for the earlier eclipses. Although Wang Feng had managed to outmaneuver Wang Zhang by appealing to Chengdi's sense of filial piety, his narrow escape led the Wang family to realize that omen interpretation, far from being a "safe" way to manipulate Chengdi, could backfire if employed too often for partisan purposes.

Liu Xiang was the only minister at court who still dared to express defiance toward the Wang family faction, but evidently he had given up using omenology as his primary means of registering his protests. In a sealed memorial submitted about 23 BCE, Liu Xiang did refer to a portent witnessed at the tomb of Wang Feng's great-grandfather in 45 BCE, to warn Chengdi that the Wang family would eventually try to usurp the Han throne, if the family's powers continued unchecked. But Liu Xiang's memorial drew its rhetorical force mostly from historical examples rather than from omen interpretations, suggesting that he had by then lost confidence in omenological strategies.⁴⁵ After reading the sealed memorial, Chengdi reportedly summoned Liu Xiang to a private audience, in which he indicated agreement through heavy sighing; at the same time, Chengdi urged Liu Xiang to give him more time to consider how best to resolve the matter.⁴⁶ Following that inconsequential meeting, Liu Xiang for more than a decade did not choose to read omens as warnings against the power of the Wang family.⁴⁷ Instead, we are told, Liu Xiang tried a new tactic: he would attempt to influence Chengdi by compiling collections of historical anecdotes for him, such as Liu's compendia entitled *Xinxu* (*New Order*) and *Shuoyuan* (*Profusion of Persuasions*), in hopes that the weight of past events would convince Chengdi of the dangers of powerful consort clans.⁴⁸

In 19 BCE, Wang Yin attempted, for the first time so far as we know, to use an omen interpretation not to attack a political rival but to warn Chengdi against his own increasingly erratic and seemingly reckless behavior. In the spring of 20 BCE, Chengdi had commissioned the construction of a new mausoleum at Changling, east of the capital, after eleven years had already gone into building a mausoleum site at Yanling, northwest of the capital (see Loewe's chapter on Chengdi's two tombs, in this volume). Chengdi had also begun leaving the palace more often to roam the capital incognito, accompanied by his male lover Zhang Fang (d. 7 BCE) and a small group of bodyguards and servants in disguise.⁴⁹ The only omen reported between the spring of 20 BCE and the spring of 19 BCE was the sighting of a yellow dragon in the winter, but a similar sighting had been interpreted as an auspicious portent in 53 BCE.⁵⁰ In the absence of

suitably negative portents, Wang Yin resorted to staging an omen: a flock of pheasants was released in a hall where the Academicians were performing a ritual, and then the birds were led through the residences of the Commissioner for Ceremonial, Commissioner of the Imperial Clan, Chancellor, Imperial Counsellor, and Marshal of State (i.e., Wang Yin), before ending on the roof of one of the halls of the imperial palace.⁵¹

Wang Yin's omen bore a striking resemblance to a well-known portent reported in the *Shangshu (Documents)*, in which a pheasant alighted on a ritual tripod just as the Shang king was performing a sacrifice to one of his ancestors. The king heeded the warning and reformed his method of governance, and as a result the kingdom prospered.⁵² Wang Yin presumably designed the route the pheasants took so as to give the impression that Heaven was laying the ultimate responsibility for the survival of the ruling house on Chengdi himself, rather than on the senior ministers of the court. Indeed, Wang Yin and some other ministers submitted a memorial advancing just such an interpretation, but Chengdi was highly skeptical. He ordered some of the pheasants to be caught and examined, and their feathers were found to be damaged in a manner suggesting recent captivity. When Chengdi pressed Wang Yin about this, insinuating that the omen was a hoax, Wang Yin hotly denied it; he reiterated his belief that only Chengdi could put an end to the bad omens, beget an heir, and repair the dynastic fortunes by ceasing his incognito excursions.⁵³ Since Wang Yin must have been well aware of the potential danger to himself and the Wang family if Chengdi discovered his role in the fabrication of an evil omen, this episode seems to support the *Hanshu's* claim that Yin was unique among members of the Wang family in remonstrating Chengdi out of genuine loyalty.⁵⁴

Although Chengdi did not pursue Wang Yin's role in the "omen," he ignored Yin's remonstrances and, naturally enough, his suspicions about the Wang family grew. Sometime later Chengdi discovered that Wang Shang (d. 12 BCE) and Wang Gen (d. 2 BCE), brothers to the late Wang Feng, were flouting the sumptuary laws, while a third brother, Wang Li (d. 3 CE), was harboring miscreants and fugitives in his home. Furious, Chengdi berated Wang Yin and the two officials in charge of law enforcement in the capital for allowing these criminal activities. Wang Shang and Wang Gen then cynically sought to force their sister, the empress dowager, to protect them from prosecution by threatening to mutilate themselves in her presence. Chengdi, all the more incensed, ordered the execution of the Wang brothers, only relenting after all three brothers along with Wang Yin abased themselves before him and pled for mercy.⁵⁵ Thereafter, the members of the Wang family wisely refrained from further remonstrance, whether omen based or not, against Chengdi's behavior.

On one of Chengdi's incognito excursions he encountered the dancing girl Zhao Feiyan and took her and her younger sister (whose name is not recorded in reliable sources) into his back palaces. Soon the Zhao sisters became his favorite consorts. In 18 BCE Zhao Feiyan managed to have Empress Xu deposed, by accusing her of practicing black magic. Chengdi wanted to install Zhao Feiyan as the new empress in her place,

but Empress Dowager Wang objected to her base origins. Chengdi, with the aid of the empress dowager's nephew Chunyu Chang (d. 8 BCE), spent more than a year persuading her to agree to Zhao Feiyan's installation as empress, which finally took place in the summer of 16 BCE.⁵⁶ By this time, the Changling mausoleum project had run into serious difficulties, as the ground was too wet to support stable foundations. On the urging of many officials, Chengdi finally cancelled that project in early autumn and ordered work to resume at the old Yanling site.⁵⁷

From 18 to 16 BCE the court did not use any omen interpretations to warn Chengdi against either incognito excursions or the Changling project. But it is possible that Wang Yin had instructed the court astronomers to be on the lookout for solar eclipses, in hopes that Chengdi might still be swayed by something as indisputably authentic and ominous as an eclipse. Furthermore, although the *Hanshu* does not mention Wang Yin's attitude toward Zhao Feiyan, it is quite likely that he, like Empress Dowager Wang, disapproved of her selection as the new empress. If so, he may have sought a solar eclipse as an omenological basis for opposing it. This possibility is suggested by the court astronomers' report, on the last day of the ninth lunar month (corresponding to November 1, 16 BCE), of a partial solar eclipse so small that, according to Homer Dubs's analysis, it could only have been noticed "by special means, such as looking at the reflection of the sun in a mirror [or] a stream."⁵⁸ Since such an eclipse would certainly have been "missed" or suppressed by the astronomers if Wang Yin (who presumably controlled their activities) had perceived the occurrence of a solar eclipse to be politically disadvantageous to himself, we may infer that Wang Yin was instead hoping for, perhaps even expecting, an eclipse that he could present as a warning to Chengdi.

In the same lunar month as the barely visible eclipse, a sighting of a black dragon at Donglai on the Shandong Peninsula was reported, arousing much curiosity in the capital about the possible meanings of such an omen. Was it an auspicious sign, like a yellow dragon, or something worrisome?⁵⁹ For several months Chengdi made no comment regarding these debates, but a meteor shower on March 27, 15 BCE, and a solar eclipse a mere two days later finally drove him to issue an edict blaming himself for the recent portents.⁶⁰ This is probably what emboldened the Wang family faction once again to attempt to invoke omenology as a way of rebuilding their much diminished influence over Chengdi.

Phase 3, Early 15–Early 12 BCE: Wangs Use Omens to Criticize Chengdi and Zhang Fang; Those Outside the Court Use Omens to Criticize Wangs

On April 9, 15 BCE, Chengdi appointed Wang Shang, one of Wang Feng's brothers, to succeed Wang Yin, who had died in February.⁶¹ Phase 3 began with Wang Shang's appointment. One of Wang Shang's first acts as the new Marshal of State was to appoint Gu Yong as Regional Inspector of Liangzhou, rescuing him from a low-ranking post as supervisor of the imperial pastures. Throughout Wang Yin's term as Marshal of State,

he had consigned Gu Yong to political obscurity as a penalty for having backed Wang Feng's brother Wang Tan, rather than Wang Yin himself, to succeed to Wang Feng's position.⁶² Wang Shang, however, now recognized Gu Yong as the Wang family's ideal mouthpiece for omen-based criticism against Chengdi.

When Gu Yong was about to leave the capital to take up his new post, Chengdi, perhaps on Wang Shang's recommendation, sent a member of the court Secretariat (Shangshu) to ask him about the meaning of the black dragon portent. Gu equivocated somewhat, saying merely that it was possible the dragon sighting portended rebellion by a member of the imperial clan. But he then claimed that Chengdi's own irresponsible and self-indulgent behavior was to blame for the unprecedented occurrence of four omens within the space of six months. Gu went on to deliver an unusually harsh diatribe against Chengdi for three types of offenses: condoning abuses of power by the Zhao sisters and Li Ping (which, Gu alleged, included torturing innocent people to death); the unbecoming habit of traveling incognito with "inferior men" (*xiaoren*) like Zhang Fang; and incurring unnecessary expenses in commissioning two separate imperial mausoleums at Yanling and at Changling.

Because he held Gu Yong's classical learning in high regard, Chengdi in 29 BCE had treated Gu with great respect, despite Gu's use of unusually blunt rhetoric bordering on *lèse majesté*. But Gu Yong's words (as reported by the member of the Secretariat) now threw the emperor into a rage, insofar as he saw the hand of the Wang family in Gu's latest tirade. Sensing the danger for Gu Yong, Wang Shang secretly arranged for Gu's escape from Chang'an. Chengdi then demanded Gu Yong's arrest, instructing the officials sent in pursuit to let him go if Gu got beyond a courier station 60 *li* (25 km) from the capital. Chengdi's anger had cooled by the time the officials returned empty-handed. In 14 BCE, Chengdi even recalled Gu Yong to the imperial court and appointed him Grand Counsellor of the Palace.⁶³ In lashing out against Gu Yong, Chengdi was probably seeking a scapegoat on whom to vent his frustration over the Wang family's persistent attempts to control him, as he felt himself unable to remove them from power without disobeying his mother and causing her distress. This would explain why Chengdi set limits on the capture of Gu Yong and quickly forgave his outrageously offensive rhetoric.

At about the same time, circa early 15 BCE, Liu Xiang also submitted a memorial criticizing the scale and monstrous expense of the two mausoleum projects. This memorial cited many historical precedents of good emperors who preferred simple tombs to lavish mausoleums, but did not mention a single omen.⁶⁴ Liu Xiang also remonstrated several times against Chengdi's incognito excursions and supposedly compiled the *Lienü zhuan* (*Exemplary Women*) to dissuade the emperor from favoring the Zhao sisters and Li Ping. Although Chengdi proved unable to follow Liu Xiang's advice, he always appreciated Liu's intentions, according to the *Hanshu*.⁶⁵ This suggests that Chengdi trusted Liu Xiang's judgment, in large part presumably because Liu was the only high official in the capital whom Chengdi could be certain was not beholden to the Wang

family, and consequently Liu did not need to invent omen theories. Conversely, the *Hanshu* tells us that Chengdi stopped trusting Gu Yong's omen interpretations after he realized that Gu was a member of the Wang family faction.⁶⁶

After Gu Yong's remonstrance failed to convince Chengdi, Wang Shang and his brothers adopted a different strategy: blaming the recent omens on Zhang Fang, whose intimate relationship with Chengdi they resented and feared. The Wang brothers convinced the empress dowager that Zhang Fang had led Chengdi astray. They also instructed Chancellor Xue Xuan (d. ca. 7 BCE) and Imperial Counsellor Zhai Fangjin (d. 7 BCE) to submit a memorial charging Zhang and his servants with various crimes. Under pressure from both his mother and the Wang family allies at court, Chengdi with obvious reluctance posted Zhang Fang out of Chang'an in 15 BCE.⁶⁷ In the winter of the same year, Chengdi struck back at Xue Xuan and Zhai Fangjin by dismissing the former from office and demoting the latter on charges of incompetence and corruption. The post of Chancellor was left vacant for a full twenty-four days before Chengdi finally accepted the court's (essentially the Wang faction's) recommendation that Zhai Fangjin was the best man for the job. Zhai thus emerged from this episode humiliated, but otherwise better off than before.⁶⁸

The occurrence of three solar eclipses in less than two years—on March 18, 14 BCE; August 31, 13 BCE; and January 26, 12 BCE—prevented Chengdi from recalling Zhang Fang to the capital, lest Zhang be blamed for them.⁶⁹ During the same period, however, in the winter of 14–13 BCE, many commanderies on the North China Plain suffered great floods and bad harvests, which in turn spurred dissatisfaction with the government and the outbreak of two armed rebellions.⁷⁰ Junior officials and commoners alike began submitting memorials to the imperial court that blamed the eclipses and natural calamities on the Wang family's monopoly on power.⁷¹

The *Hanshu* preserves the text of one such memorial, written in about 13–12 BCE by Mei Fu, a retired local official living in Jiujiang Commandery (present-day Anhui). It blames the Wang family for the portents since Chengdi's accession:

The ruler's will is held in contempt and his authority is usurped, as the power of consort kin grows stronger each day. Even if Your Majesty cannot see the problem itself, at least examine the shadow it is casting. Since the Jianshi reign period [32–29 BCE], the frequency of solar eclipses and earthquakes has been three times the rate recorded in the *Annals* (*Chunqiu*), and the number of floods is incomparably larger. The yin is flourishing at the expense of the yang, so that even iron flies upward. What a shadow that is!⁷²

Mei Fu also lamented the lack of honest remonstrance at the imperial court for more than the decade prior, since Wang Zhang's unjust death. According to Mei, many commoners who had submitted loyal criticisms of the government had been charged by the Commissioner of Trials with memorializing on "nonurgent" matters and had been

punished with execution.⁷³ Mei's memorial suggests that the Wang family faction, threatened by these new attacks from outside the capital, was using its influence over officialdom to eliminate present critics and deter potential ones.

Chengdi managed to read a number of these memorials (including Mei Fu's), perhaps because they were sealed memorials, and he was inclined to agree with them. In early 12 BCE, deeply troubled by the eclipses but still uncertain of their significance, Chengdi sought the advice of the former Chancellor Zhang Yu, who had retired eight years earlier but was still consulted regularly on important matters of state. Chengdi visited Zhang Yu's home, showed him the memorials blaming the Wang family, and asked him if they should be believed. Zhang, who had tutored Chengdi in the *Analects* (*Lunyu*) when he was heir apparent, cited that text to argue that omen interpretation was so difficult that even Confucius had refrained from speaking about anomalies, wonders, and Heaven's will. How then could Chengdi trust the "shallow-minded vulgar classicists" and "novice scholars" who wrote these memorials? Chengdi had great respect for Zhang Yu's learning, and apparently this persuaded him that the Wang family had nothing to do with the omens. According to the *Hanshu* account, Zhang Yu secretly agreed with the memorials, but he pretended not to, lest he or his family incur the wrath of the Wang family.⁷⁴ This implies that he had little confidence in Chengdi's ability to remove the Wang family from power, even if convinced of their responsibility for the omens.

Phase 4, Early 12–7 BCE: Growing Interest in Omen-Based Eschatology

Phase 4 began at about the time when Chengdi's attitude softened toward the Wang family, following his conversation with Zhang Yu; we might also date the start of Phase 4 more exactly to late August, in 12 BCE, after the appearance of Halley's Comet led Chengdi to issue an edict ordering his ministers and Academicians to interpret this bright comet along with two other recent omens, a partial solar eclipse and a spectacular meteor shower.⁷⁵ Gu Yong was just about to leave the capital to serve as Governor of Beidi, so Chunyu Chang (who had since become Chengdi's favorite minister) was sent to meet Gu and record his interpretation of the three omens.⁷⁶ Since by this time Chengdi was certainly aware of Gu Yong's factional loyalties, his interest in hearing Gu's interpretation may reflect both his consternation over the latest series of omens and a measure of restored trust in the Wang family.

The tone and tenor of Gu Yong's response, as reported by Chunyu Chang, differed from that of his 15 BCE remonstrance, insofar as it put less blame directly on Chengdi and spoke more of the dark days ahead for the Han dynasty, including plots within the imperial palace and more rebellions in the commanderies. As Liu Tseng-kui's chapter in this volume explains, Gu Yong supported this prediction by pointing out that Han was approaching the end of several calendrical and numerological cycles simultaneously, which would necessarily be accompanied by various calamities. Therefore,

although Gu Yong's interpretations still reiterated the standard omenological formula, in which good rulers receive good omens and bad rulers receive bad omens, he further claimed that the current omens carried an eschatological significance transcending any individual's virtues or misdeeds. The number of omens that had occurred since Chengdi's accession was exceptionally large, Gu Yong asserted, not because Chengdi was an exceptionally bad ruler, but because he had the misfortune to rule in exceptionally perilous times. Gu Yong did argue, however, that the worst of the impending crises could be averted if Chengdi rid himself of the influence of unworthy companions and consorts, stopped his incognito excursions, rejected a recent proposal to raise taxes, reduced government expenditures, and stepped up relief efforts for refugees displaced by the floods.⁷⁷

The *Hanshu* says, rather cryptically, that Chengdi was "deeply moved" by Gu Yong's words.⁷⁸ This reaction may have had less to do with Gu Yong's policy recommendations than with his incorporation of omenological theory into eschatological understandings of cosmic cycles that were gaining influence at this time. In Phase 4 of Chengdi's reign, the prevailing mood reflected increasing anxiety that the Han dynasty might be nearing its end. Whereas the politics of omenology had earlier centered on blaming omens on specific groups or individuals, including Chengdi himself, some of the omen interpreters now turned to ponder the larger question of what actions the government could possibly take to stave off the perceived imminent sociopolitical crisis.

Early in the spring of 10 BCE, a landslide in the Min Mountains (central Sichuan) blocked the flow of the Min River for three days. Liu Xiang interpreted this landslide, occurring within the Liu ruling clan's territory and following the appearance of Halley's Comet, as predicting the end of the Han dynasty. Liu Xiang found this possibility so distressing that he decided to end his long hiatus from omenology. He therefore submitted a memorial emphasizing the dire significance of the recent comet and the high frequency of solar eclipses during the past two decades; he then claimed that the astrological aspects of the comet were so difficult to describe adequately in writing that he would require a personal interview with Chengdi to explicate a chart he had devised. Chengdi immediately granted Liu Xiang a private audience, but in the end he felt he could not follow Liu's recommendations. The *Hanshu* does not clearly state what these recommendations were, but the text hints darkly in the very next line that they aimed to strengthen the imperial clan and weaken the Wang family.⁷⁹ If this was indeed the case, Liu Xiang's explicit request for an oral interview may have been designed to avoid giving the powerful Wang faction something in writing that they could use as basis for retaliation.

By now, however, the Wang family faction was probably no less worried than Liu Xiang about the future of the Han dynasty. Gu Yong had returned to Chang'an about late 11 BCE to take up a ministerial post as Commissioner of Agriculture, but he no longer served as the Wang faction's favorite omen interpreter.⁸⁰ Instead Wang Gen, who had become Marshal of State upon Wang Shang's death, in early 11 BCE, sought an

interpretation of the recent omens from a classically trained astrologer named Li Xun, who served on Chancellor Zhai Fangjin's staff. Like Gu Yong and Liu Xiang, Li Xun believed the concatenation of ill omens portended disaster for the Han ruling line and for the empire as a whole. In reinterpreting various earlier portents as warnings about a disastrous flood, Li Xun assured Wang Gen that further disasters could be averted by three measures: recruiting more "worthy" men to office (with "worth" doubtless defined in terms of loyalty to the Wang family), dismissing officials who had been oppressing the people, and improving existing flood-prevention measures. Wang Gen was much impressed by Li Xun's omenological expertise and recommended him for a higher post, but Chengdi evidently took little interest in Li.⁸¹

Toward the end of Chengdi's reign in 7 BCE, however, Li Xun was involved in an enigmatic incident that suggests that the new focus on preserving the dynasty had not completely overshadowed the use of omens purely as political weapons. Wang Gen had recently retired and handed the post of Marshal of State over to his nephew Wang Mang (45 BCE–23 CE), after a nasty round of infighting within the Wang family faction. By the winter of 8 BCE, Wang Mang had succeeded in turning Wang Gen, Empress Dowager Wang, and even Chengdi against Chunyu Chang, who had once been thought the probable successor to Wang Gen. Chunyu was sent to jail, where he died, and many of his supporters were dismissed from office as well. Besides Wang Mang, the other chief beneficiary of Chunyu Chang's downfall was Zhai Fangjin, who not only survived Chengdi's purge of Chunyu's close associates but also used the opportunity to eliminate another group of officials led by Wang Li. Zhai was even able to pressure Chengdi into sending Zhang Fang for a second time away from Chang'an, although this pressure did not endear Zhai to the emperor.⁸²

Zhai Fangjin's luck ran out in the spring of 7 BCE, when Li Xun reported to him that the planet Mars ("the Glittering Deluder") was "guarding" (*shou*) the constellation Heart (i.e., Scorpio). This astrological phenomenon was thought to portend the death of the ruler, as it had presaged the deaths of both the First Emperor of Qin (r. 221–210 BCE) and the Han founder Gaozu (r. 202–195 BCE). A well-known anecdote regarding an incident in 480 BCE, however, suggested that the effects of a serious calamity could be transferred to the Chancellor, to the people, or to the year's harvest. Pointing to recent omens and other astrological signs as supporting evidence that Chengdi's very life was in danger, Li Xun urged Zhai Fangjin either to offer to die in Chengdi's stead or to choose someone from the Chancellor's staff for that signal "honor."⁸³ Understandably dismayed, Zhai Fangjin did not know quite how to respond, but a Courtier skilled in astrology, named Bi Li (otherwise unknown), then reported this information to Chengdi and advised him that a senior minister should assume responsibility. Under considerable pressure from Chengdi, Zhai Fangjin committed suicide, but Chengdi himself died just thirty-four days later, probably of a stroke.⁸⁴

In 1990 the Taiwanese scholars Chang Chia-feng and Huang Yi-long argued that, according to astronomical calculations, Mars was not even close to Scorpio in the night

sky during the spring of 7 BCE, as Mars only began passing through that constellation in August. Trained astrologers like Li Xun and Bi Li could not have made such a mistake. Apparently, they deliberately falsified an astronomical reading, possibly to persuade Chengdi to pressure Zhai Fangjin to commit suicide. Ironically, Zhai Fangjin was himself a skilled astrologer, but it would have been very difficult for him to convince Chengdi to accept his word over that of two other court astrologers who apparently bore no grudge against him. According to Chang and Huang, the mastermind who directed Li Xun and Bi Li would have been a political rival and enemy of Zhai, and they proposed Wang Mang as the most likely candidate.⁸⁵ This is a tempting hypothesis, given that Zhai Fangjin and Wang Mang were the major remaining contenders for a dominant position at court. But if Wang Mang was indeed responsible, he covered his tracks extremely well: even Ban Gu, who alleged that Wang Mang later fabricated numerous auspicious omens to facilitate his usurpation of the imperial throne, did not suspect him of falsifying this Mars portent. Since Ban Gu's *Hanshu* is the only original source we have for the political history of this period, the hypothesis of Wang Mang's perfidy will never be proven, absent a new discovery.⁸⁶

By the time of Chengdi's death and Aidi's accession, Li Xun had begun to support the teachings of Gan Zhongke, who at some point during Chengdi's reign (probably during Phase 4) had claimed that the Lord of Heaven (Tiandi) had taught him a method to avert the downfall of the Han dynasty through a ritual renewal of its heavenly Mandate. Liu Xiang had persuaded Chengdi to have Gan Zhongke arrested as a charlatan (Gan later died in prison), but Gan's disciples, notably Xia Heliang (d. 5 BCE), continued to spread his ideas secretly. Li Xun, whose omen readings Aidi, as well as Chengdi, held in high regard, helped Xia Heliang gain several private audiences with Aidi, after Chengdi's death. By 5 BCE Aidi was persuaded to put Gan Zhongke's method into practice, but a mere two months later he lost confidence in Xia Heliang and executed him, along with his followers. At the same time, Li Xun was punished with exile to Dunhuang for recommending Xia; he never returned to the capital.⁸⁷

Can we reconcile Li Xun's eschatological beliefs, which led him to risk his career over Gan Zhongke's claims of divine revelation, with his willingness to participate in a conspiracy to deceive Chengdi with an invented omen? What was going through Wang Yin's mind in 19 BCE when he fabricated an omen, based on the interpretation he wanted to make, rather than interpreting an actual omen? Similarly, did men like Gu Yong, Wang Feng, Wang Zhang, Mei Fu, and Liu Xiang believe in their own omen interpretations, or were they simply taking advantage of Chengdi's belief in omens to exert influence over him? Eberhard, aware that such questions cannot be answered at this remove, was inclined to take a cynical view: "The question whether the educated elite of the Han believed in portents or not is hard to decide. The fact that some portents were fabricated, [and] that others were used in factional struggles to prove the arguments of one or the other side, makes us inclined to assume that at least some persons did not believe in portents at all."⁸⁸

The striking tendency of omen interpretations to serve political and factional interests is better explained, however, by the capacity for a person's perceptions of truth and reality to be influenced, even determined, by calculations of self-interest. To an omen interpreter driven by political ambitions and agendas, omens may have simply confirmed what he already chose to believe was Heaven's will. Occasionally, if those beliefs told him there *ought to have been* an omen where none occurred, he could even justify inventing one on Heaven's behalf. Paul Veyne's study of the ancient Greeks supplies similar examples to argue that "the coexistence of contradictory truths in the same mind is . . . a universal fact":

Lévi-Strauss's sorcerer believes in his magic and cynically manipulates it. . . . The Greeks question the Pythia and know that sometimes this prophetess makes propaganda for Persia or Macedonia; the Romans fix their state religion for political purposes by throwing sacred fowl into the water if these do not furnish the necessary predictions; and all peoples give their oracles—or their statistical data—a nudge to confirm what they wish to believe. . . . If we are able to believe in contradictory things, it is probably because in some cases the knowledge we have of an object is distorted by our interests. For objects set in the sphere of reality exist naturally, and a natural light of the mind is reflected off them and back to us. Sometimes the light comes to us directly, at others it is influenced by imagination—or passion, as they said in the seventeenth century—or by authority, or interest, as we say today. And so the same object gives off two reflections, and the second is distorted.⁸⁹

Veyne's insight may also be useful in understanding Wang Mang's controversial place in Han politics during and after Chengdi's reign. Ban Gu, influenced by the political interests of his day, represented (and probably himself perceived) Wang Mang as a treacherous hypocrite. He therefore reinterpreted most of the omens from Chengdi's reign as Heaven's warnings that the Wang family's rise would end in Wang Mang's usurpation, if left unchecked.⁹⁰ But if we avoid seeing history through Ban Gu's eyes—difficult as that may be, given our dependence on his narrative—it is equally possible that Wang Mang was responding to the eschatological angst that gripped the last years of Chengdi's reign, believing that Heaven had placed him in a unique position to save the Han world from a coming cataclysm, even if Wang had to fabricate portents and sacrifice the moribund ruling dynasty in the process.⁹¹

Conclusion

An attempt at reaching a persuasive answer to the question of why more omens were reported for Chengdi's reign than for any previous reign cannot realistically be made absent detailed analyses of the politics of omenology in earlier reigns, especially those

of Xuandi (r. 74–49 BCE) and Yuandi, as well as the later reigns of Aidi, Pingdi (r. 1–6 CE), Wang Mang (r. 9–23 CE), and the early Eastern Han emperors. A series of synchronic analyses would be needed to lay the foundation for a diachronic study that would then identify changes over time in the relationship between omenological theories and politics, and in the interactions among recognized omen interpreters, influential ministers, and their emperors.⁹² The key weakness in the earlier diachronic studies by Bielenstein and Eberhard stems from their neglect to take such changes into account and their near-exclusive concentration on those causal factors that Ban Gu considered important—namely, the moral merits and demerits of individual emperors, courtiers, and consort clans.

The identifiable shifts almost certainly involved a complex of causes, rather than a monocausal explanation involving “indirect criticism,” popular discontent, or factional conflict. The relative weight of each contributing factor relative to the others surely varied not just between reigns but also within reigns, from one phase to another. Moreover, we should look beyond the political for causes, including, for example, the increased influence of classicism on omenological practices and on beliefs in cosmic cycles, in the Mandate of Heaven, and in Heaven’s intervention in the political affairs of the human world. Besides providing an analysis of the use and abuse of omenology within its immediate political context, future studies will ideally situate that political context within the larger cultural manifold (to borrow Nathan Sivin’s phrase). Hopefully, the present volume demonstrates both the feasibility of and potential for a more holistic approach to the period.

Notes

- 1 On the origins of this theory of omens, see Aihe Wang 2000, 173–209. Wang specifically attributes the establishment of this theory to the classicists Lu Jia (ca. 228–140 BCE) and Dong Zhongshu (ca. 198–107 BCE); Wang interprets it in the context of a conflict between “scholar-officials” at the imperial court and the “noble kings” whose kingdoms posed a challenge to the court’s authority in the second century BCE.
- 2 *Hanshu* 10.307.
- 3 Bielenstein 1950, 127–43; 1984, 97–110.
- 4 Bielenstein 1984, 102.
- 5 Bielenstein 1950, 141.
- 6 Here Hans Bielenstein specifically disagreed with Homer Dubs, who argued that the indirect criticism came from the common people reporting the omens to the officials. Bielenstein tried to show that there was no correlation between the temper of the people and the number of omens reported. See Bielenstein 1950, 135–41; 1984, 102.
- 7 Bielenstein did not include solar eclipses in his earlier count; he had already made a separate chart to show that solar eclipses tended not to be recorded in the reigns of emperors whom their officials considered to be ruling well. According to his interpretation, therefore, both the recording of observed eclipses and the reporting of omens followed the same pattern. This argument, however, is seriously compromised by the reign of Yuandi (48–33 BCE), in which there occurred both a large number of unrecorded eclipses (seven out of ten observable

eclipses) and a large number of recorded omens. Dubs noticed this contradiction and suggested an explanation—namely, that it was thought unnecessary at the time to use the observation of solar eclipses to correct errors in the standard calendar. Bielenstein acknowledged the existence of Dubs’s explanation but made no serious attempt to refute it, essentially ignoring the problem it posed to his own theory. See Bielenstein 1950, 130–34, 140–41, and 1984, 103; Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 355.

- 8 Eberhard 1957, esp. 42–44, 58; Kern 2000, esp. 3–4.
- 9 Eberhard 1957, 53.
- 10 Ibid. Liu Xiang bore the name Liu Gengsheng until Chengdi’s accession; I refer to him as Liu Xiang for the sake of clarity.
- 11 *Hanshu* 36.1929–32. According to the *Hanshu*, Liu Xiang’s faction included the ministers Xiao Wangzhi (d. 47 BCE), Zhou Kan (d. ca. 43 BCE), and Jin Chang (n.d.). Liu’s dismissal was temporary.
- 12 Eberhard 1957, 52.
- 13 Cf. Nylan, forthcoming b.
- 14 Kern 2000, 31.
- 15 One might object that political context is as open to interpretation as fluctuating numbers of omens, and the *Hanshu* imposes one such interpretation for which there are no readily available alternatives. But even the less subjective elements of the *Hanshu* account of political events suggest strongly, for example, that major shifts in the use of omen interpretation corresponded closely to changes in the leadership of the politically dominant Wang family, as well as changes in the Wang family’s ability to influence Chengdi.
- 16 Eberhard 1957, 53, 56, 69.
- 17 *Hanshu* 27.1449. The night before the dust storm, a fiery glow was observed in the sky to the northwest. This would seem to suggest a volcanic eruption, but there is no record of a contemporaneous eruption at the nearest volcano, which was at Turpan (Turfan).
- 18 *Hanshu* 10.303–4, 98.4017. The birth and death dates for Yang Xing and Si Sheng are unknown.
- 19 Huo Guang was the only other person to previously hold this combination of posts after Wudi’s death in 87 BCE. That precedent may well have alarmed some people in Chengdi’s court, given the amount of power that Huo and his kinsmen were able to wield.
- 20 *Hanshu* 10.302, 98.4016–17.
- 21 *Hanshu* 19.818–19, 93.3279–30, 97.3973–74.
- 22 *Hanshu* 19.824, 60.2667, 97.3974, 98.4017–18.
- 23 *Hanshu* 10.307, 27.1504.
- 24 *Hanshu* 10.308, 81.3344–46, 85.3451. According to *Hanshu* 19.824 and *Hanji* 24.422, Kuang Heng was dismissed from office in February 3, 29 BCE, and the Palace Writers were dismissed on March 1 of the same year. Kuang’s death cannot be dated based on when he was dismissed from office; his biography states that he “died at home,” but it does not indicate clearly that he died soon after his dismissal.
- 25 *Hanshu* 27.1504, 60.2671–74, 85.3444–54. Gu Yong was named Gu Bing at this time. He changed his name to Gu Yong in 14 BCE to avoid having the same name as the rebel leader Fan Bing (*Hanshu* 85.3473). For clarity, I refer to him as Gu Yong.
- 26 *Hanshu* 97.3973–74. Michael Loewe has interpreted Du Qin and Gu Yong as harshly criticizing Chengdi for overindulgence in women in general. But their arguments actually urged Chengdi to increase his chances of siring an heir by having more sexual partners; Gu Yong even suggested that the pool of candidates be widened to include women of base status and widows who had previously borne healthy children. See Loewe 2005, 87–88; 2006, 14, 194.
- 27 *Hanshu* 85.3452, 97.3973.
- 28 *Hanshu* 85.3454.

- 29 See, for example, Gu Yong's interpretation of an omen that occurred in 35 BCE, two years before Chengdi's accession, as a warning against the future Empress Xu (*Hanshu* 27.1425).
- 30 *Hanshu* 36.1929–49, 97.3974. For examples of Liu Xiang's interpretations blaming Empress Xu, see *Hanshu* 27.1504 (interpreting the eclipse of 28 BCE), 27.1517 (interpreting the comet of 32 BCE).
- 31 *Hanshu* 10.309, 97.3974–79. One of the nine portents was the comet of 32 BCE. For more information on six of the other portents, see *Hanshu* 10.304–9, 26.1309, 27.1374, 1416, 1474–75.
- 32 *Hanshu* 10.310, 36.1950.
- 33 *Hanshu* 10.310. Tang Chon Chit 2009, 56, suggests that this was one of the more important reasons for Liu Xiang's assignment.
- 34 *Hanshu* 30.1705, 36.1950.
- 35 *Hanshu* 82.3369–75. On Li Ping, see *Hanshu* 97.3984. Wang Shang's biography only says he “vomited blood and died” (*Hanshu* 82.3375), but *Hanshu* 26.1309 says he committed suicide. Zhang Kuang, whom *Hanshu* 82.3372 describes as “sycophantic and duplicitous,” was clearly working for Wang Feng. Shi Dan was related to Wang Shang by marriage but had evidently decided that greater security would come from joining Wang Feng's faction. Besides supplying evidence for Zhang Kuang's accusations, Shi Dan assumed the mission of communicating these accusations to Chengdi and recommending the death sentence for Wang Shang.
- 36 *Hanshu* 81.3348.
- 37 *Hanshu* 98.4019, 4021.
- 38 *Hanshu* 97.3982.
- 39 *Hanshu* 98.4020–22.
- 40 *Hanshu* 60.2677, 76.3238, 98.4022–23.
- 41 *Hanshu* 19.312, 98.4023.
- 42 *Hanshu* 98.4023–24.
- 43 Seven omens were reported from the commanderies in Phase 2, a period of slightly more than eight years: meteorites in the spring of 22 BCE (*Hanshu* 10.314, 27.1521), a yellow dragon in the winter of 20–19 BCE (*Hanshu* 10.316), a thunderous sound emanating from a large rock in the summer of 18 BCE (*Hanshu* 27.1341), a rain of fish in the autumn of 17 BCE (*Hanshu* 27.1431), a giant fish caught in the spring of 16 BCE (*Hanshu* 27.1431), a tree growing a branch that resembled a man's head in the same spring (*Hanshu* 27.1413), and a black dragon in the autumn of 16 BCE (*Hanshu* 10.321, 85.3459).
- 44 *Hanshu* 10.318–319, 27.1336–37.
- 45 As readers will recall, Liu Xiang had earlier compiled an omen catalogue; he had also seen Wang Zhang's interpretation of solar eclipses fail to move Chengdi to action against the Wang family.
- 46 *Hanshu* 27.1412–13, 36.1958–63. Liu Xiang's *Hanshu* biography places this memorial during a time corresponding to 16–12 BCE, but the *Zizhi tongjian* dates it to 23 BCE, based on its reference to the leader of the Wang family faction as the “General-in-Chief,” a title only Wang Feng was strongly identified with. Wang Feng's brother Wang Shang held the post of General-in-Chief for only seventeen days before his death in 11 BCE; Wang Yin and Wang Gen, never. See *Zizhi tongjian* 30.985–87, 32.1031; *Hanshu* 19.838–39.
- 47 That is, until 10 BCE.
- 48 *Hanshu* 36.1958.
- 49 *Hanshu* 10.316, 27.1368, 59.2654–55, 93.3733.
- 50 *Hanshu* 8.269, 10.316.
- 51 *Hanshu* 10.316, 27.1417.
- 52 On this omen, see *Hanshu* 27.1411. Ironically, Chengdi had cited the same omen to admonish Empress Xu in 28 BCE (*Hanshu* 97.3980).
- 53 *Hanshu* 27.1417–18.

- 54 *Hanshu* 98.4027.
- 55 *Hanshu* 98.4025.
- 56 *Hanshu* 10.318–19, 93.3730, 97.3982, 3984, 3988–89.
- 57 *Hanshu* 10.320, 70.3024.
- 58 *Hanshu* 27.1505; Dubs 1938, 512, for the solar eclipses.
- 59 *Hanshu* 10.320–21, 85.3459. The general interest aroused by the black dragon sighting is evident in a question posed to Chen Tang. See *Hanshu* 70.3025–26. On the different dates for the dragon sighting given in the *Hanshu* and in *Hanji* 26.458, see the *Zizhi tongjian kaoyi* as quoted in *Zizhi tongjian* 23.1014.
- 60 *Hanshu* 10.321, 26.1311, 27.1505. The eclipse of March 29, 15 BCE, was the first clearly observable solar eclipse since 24 BCE, but it was not visible in Chang'an because of an overcast sky and had to be reported by the commanderies.
- 61 *Hanshu* 19.834–35 incorrectly dates Wang Shang's appointment to the *dingyou* day of the second lunar month, but the *dingyou* day occurred in the third month, twelve days after the eclipse of March 29. *Hanji* 26.458 and *Zizhi tongjian* 31.1007 give the correct date.
- 62 *Hanshu* 85.3455–57.
- 63 *Hanshu* 85.3458–65.
- 64 *Hanshu* 36.1950–57.
- 65 *Hanshu* 27.1368, 36.1957–58.
- 66 *Hanshu* 85.3473.
- 67 *Hanshu* 59.2655–56. *Hanshu* 100.4202 claims that Wang Yin instructed the Chancellor and Imperial Counsellor to press charges against Zhang Fang. But as the *Zizhi tongjian kaoyi* points out, this is chronologically incorrect; *Hanshu* 59.2655 states that the Imperial Counsellor was Zhai Fangjin, who was appointed to that post on the same day (April 9, 15 BCE) that Wang Shang officially replaced the deceased Wang Yin. See *Zizhi tongjian* 31.1013.
- 68 *Hanshu* 83.3393, 84.3416.
- 69 *Hanshu* 59.2656.
- 70 *Hanshu* 10.321, 323, 24.1142, 26.1311, 85.3470. For the roots of the flooding problem, see *Hanshu* 29.1687–91. *Hanshu* 27.1393 mentions severe droughts in the summers of 14 and 13 BCE, but it does not specify the regions affected.
- 71 *Hanshu* 81.3351.
- 72 *Hanshu* 67.2922. Mei Fu's memorial can be dated based on its mention of a rebellion that occurred in early 13 BCE. The reference to iron flying upward alludes to a strange incident at an iron foundry in Pei Commandery (in present-day Anhui) in 27 BCE. This incident was reported to the court, but no contemporary interpretation is recorded. *Hanshu* 27.1334, like Mei Fu, interprets it as an omen warning against the growing power of the Wang family.
- 73 *Hanshu* 67.2921–22. According to *Hanshu* 19.837, the Commissioner of Trials at this time was Peng Xuan (n.d.), a protégé of the former Chancellor Zhang Yu. For Peng Xuan's biography, see *Hanshu* 71.3051–52.
- 74 *Hanshu* 81.3351.
- 75 *Hanshu* 10.326, 26.1311, 1518; Dubs 1938, 512. The partial solar eclipse of January 26 was observable only by professional astronomers, but it occurred on the highly symbolic first day of the Chinese New Year. The spectacular meteor shower occurred in late March.
- 76 *Hanshu* 85.3465.
- 77 *Hanshu* 85.3465–72. *Hanshu* 29.1687–88 details Chengdi undertaking major flood relief for the common people.
- 78 *Hanshu* 85.3472.
- 79 *Hanshu* 27.1457, 36.1963–66.
- 80 *Hanshu* 85.3473.

- 81 *Hanshu* 75.3179–3183. Li Xun's views on flood control can also be seen in *Hanshu* 29.1691.
- 82 *Hanshu* 59.2656, 84.3419–20, 93.3731–32, 98.4027, 99.4041.
- 83 *Hanshu* 84.3421. For the Qin and Han precedents of the Mars omen, see *Shiji* 6.259; *Hanshu* 26.1301–2. The story of the incident in 480 BCE is told in *Shiji* 38.1631, *Lüshi chunqiu*, *juan* 6, chap. 29 (“Zhiyue”); *Huainanzi*, chap. 12 (“Daoying xun”); and Liu Xiang's *Xinxu*, *juan* 4.
- 84 *Hanshu* 10.329–30, 84.3422–24, 97.3989–90. I follow *Hanshu* 10.329, *Hanji* 27.840, and *Zizhi tongjian* 33.1051 in dating Zhai Fangjin's death to the *renzi* day of the second lunar month. *Hanshu* 26.1311 dates it to the *yichou* day, thirteen days later.
- 85 Chang and Huang 1990, 361–78. The theory proposed by Chang and Huang has recently entered popular culture in Taiwan, dramatized in a stage musical entitled *Guardians of the Stars*. The first part of the musical depicts Wang Mang and his henchman Bi Li forcing Zhai Fangjin into suicide, and the second part depicts the career of Copernicus.
- 86 The *Hanji* is essentially a rearrangement and condensation of the *Hanshu* material into annalistic form, with only minor differences in dates and wording.
- 87 *Hanshu* 10.340, 75.3192–94. Aidi was the son of Liu Kang (the King of Dingtao), who had died in 23 BCE. He was formally installed as Chengdi's heir in 7 BCE, with Wang Gen's support.
- 88 Eberhard 1957, 69.
- 89 Veyne 1988, 84.
- 90 From Ban Gu's perspective, therefore, Liu Xiang (after 27 BCE), Wang Zhang, and Mei Fu all interpreted these omens correctly. Ban's reinterpretations are found in *Hanshu* 26.1311 and scattered throughout *Hanshu* 27. On the question of whether Ban Gu himself believed in omenology, see the recent discussion in You Ziyong 2007, 33–43. You's article also contains a brief critique of Bielenstein's model at pp. 38–39.
- 91 John Wills's profile of Wang Mang (largely based on earlier scholarship) argues the following: “Ban Gu's account presents, very skillfully and insidiously, a picture of Wang Mang as a power-hungry hypocrite. Also, Ban Gu has a good deal to say about Wang Mang's fascination with omens. Writing in an age when a skeptical temper was more widespread in the elite, he makes these interests seem bizarre and eccentric when in fact they were almost universal in the elite of Wang's time. . . . Ban Gu shows [Wang Mang] pursuing his goal of usurpation single-mindedly from the beginning, manipulating the politics and arranging portents and expressions of public support that carried him to the throne, amid endless sham refusals and insincere protests that he was unworthy and incapable. There certainly was a strong element of convention in his protests and refusals, and some of the portents must have been manipulated. At some point, however, Wang Mang must have come to believe that Heaven had a very special destiny for him.” See Wills 1994, 78–79.
- To this astute analysis I would add that Ban Gu's generation was not necessarily more skeptical about omens than Wang Mang's, Ban's contemporary Wang Chong (27–97 CE) being an exception to the norm; also that it is perfectly possible that Wang Mang believed in his special destiny *and* manipulated omens to bring it about at the same time. Of course, Wang Mang's interpretation of Heaven's will was also inevitably distorted by self-interest, but his achievement lay in eventually convincing most of his peers—including even Liu Xiang's son—to embrace this interpretation, at least until he became emperor. Thereafter, as bad omens and natural calamities continued to occur, Wang Mang's charisma was increasingly discredited.
- 92 Huang Chi-shu's recent survey of the various political and ritual actions that Han imperial courts took in response to omens (especially solar eclipses), while more descriptive than interpretive or analytical, is a step in the right direction. Its main weakness is a similar assumption that the political culture relating to omens remained static from late Western Han through Eastern Han; while Huang traces the origins of certain practices and ideas, he fails to trace how they changed. See Huang Chi-shu 2009, 395–432.

Pining for the West

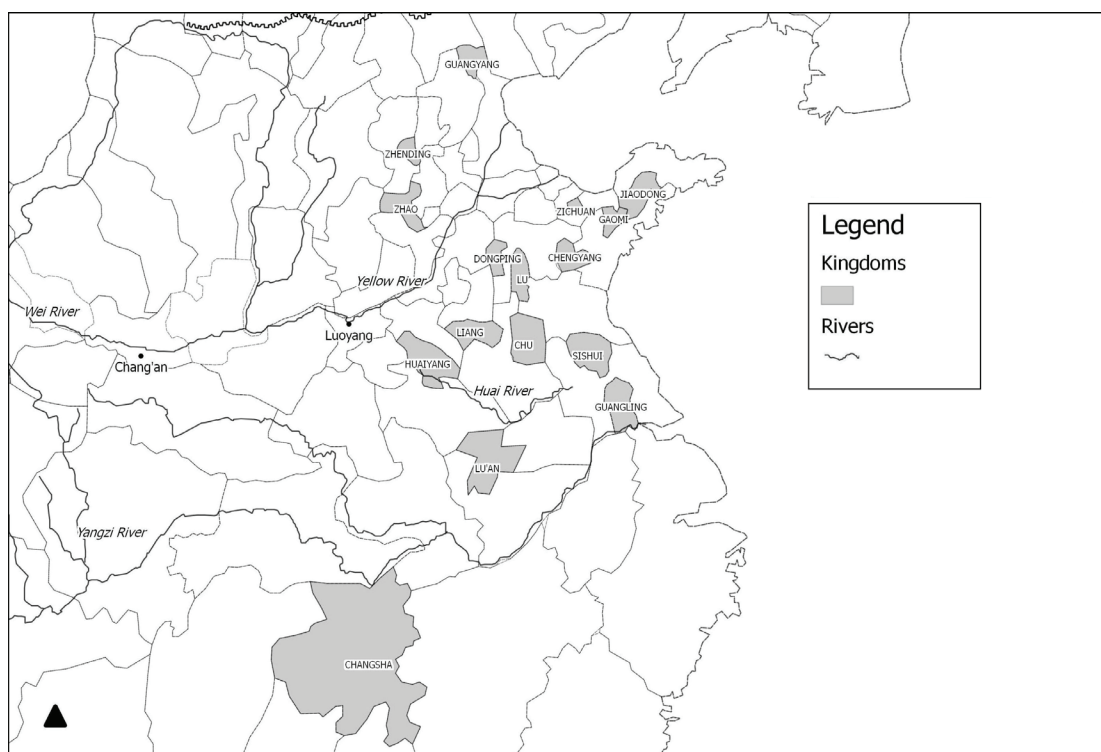
CHANG'AN IN THE LIFE OF KINGS AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING CHENGDI'S REIGN

Griet Vankeerberghen 方麗特

WHEN CHENGDI BECAME EMPEROR IN 33 BCE, HE INHERITED THE institution of the *zhuhouwang*. This institution, whereby qualified men inherited the title of king, together with a relatively large piece of land and important sumptuary privileges, was founded by Gaozu (r. 202–195 BCE) and had a turbulent early history, in which the kings suffered substantial losses in territory and power.¹ The institution that Chengdi inherited, however, was not as moribund as many historians have portrayed it. Chengdi himself, the powerful men and women at his court, and perhaps to a lesser extent the kings, not only inherited and preserved the institution but also availed themselves of it, imbuing it with new meanings. In that sense, the history of the Liu kings during Chengdi's reign offers a lens onto the various, often momentous, changes that came to fruition during that time, and the complex networks of power underlying political decisions.

Kings of Chengdi's Reign

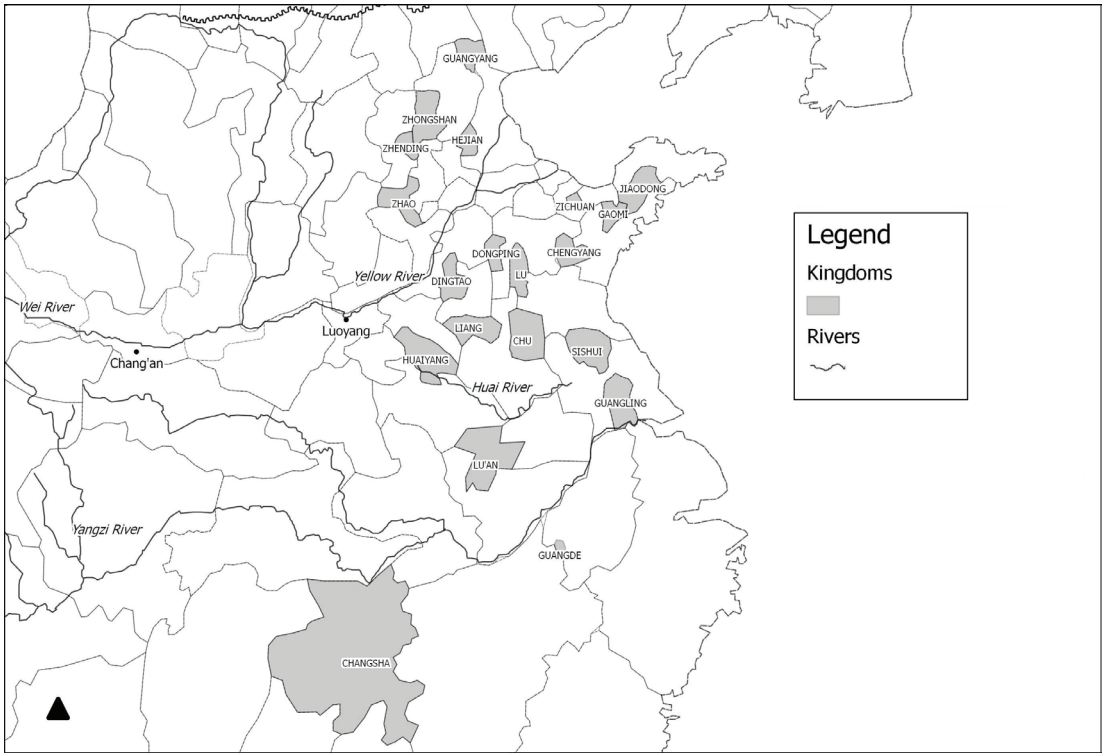
Upon his accession, Chengdi inherited eighteen kingdoms. These kingdoms continued royal lines founded by earlier Western Han emperors, including Gaozu, Wendi (r. 180–157 BCE), Jingdi (r. 157–141 BCE), and Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE); or lines founded by Chengdi's grandfather, Xuandi (r. 74–48 BCE), or his father, Yuandi (r. 48–33 BCE).



MAP 13.01 Western Han, showing the kingdoms in place in 33 BCE, as Chengdi was about to become emperor. Map by Daniel Shultz. Readers are urged to compare Maps 13.01 and 13.02.

Map 13.01 shows how most kingdoms were situated east of Luoyang and were usually surrounded by commanderies.²

Table 13.01 summarizes the history of the kingdoms during Chengdi's reign. Fourteen kingdoms continued without interruption. Two kingdoms, Hejian and Guangde, were newly created, in 31 and 19 BCE, respectively, both as restorations of old royal lines. (As Chengdi had no living sons, no new kingdoms needed to be created for his offspring.) The lines of the kingdoms of Chengyang and Guangling were interrupted for short periods of time, before being restored. Shanyang and Xindu were discontinued, as their kings (Chengdi's brothers) were transferred to Dingtao and Zhongshan. Table 13.01 certainly underscores the stability of the institution of kingship during Chengdi's reign; rather than great upheavals, there were mostly small adjustments. The total number of kingdoms changed only slightly (from eighteen in 33 BCE to nineteen in 32 BCE; from nineteen to twenty in 19 BCE and back to nineteen in 18 BCE; with a temporary drop to eighteen between 16 and 12 BCE). Amid "regular" events that punctuated the histories of the various kingdoms during Chengdi's reign (including court visits, legal cases, and deaths), highly charged political moments occurred when decisions were made to restore lines that had been interrupted or



MAP 13.02 Western Han, showing the kingdoms in place in 19 BCE. Map by Daniel Shultz.

when the Liu kings were needed to settle the imperial succession (Map 13.02; and see Map 13.01).

Royal Deaths and Accessions

Kings, as titular rulers, appointed an heir apparent (usually their oldest son), who succeeded them at the time of their death. At the Chang'an court, the death of a king set a whole train of events in motion. The Commissioner of State Visits, who ranked among the Nine Ministers, “presented to the emperor a document on the deceased king’s life. The emperor then granted the king a posthumous name, as well as condolences and a eulogy for the funeral.”³ The central court also dispatched messengers to the kingdom, dressed in undyed mourning clothes, as well as gifts that included a jade tablet to be buried with the deceased.⁴ In the kingdoms themselves, the king was laid to rest in a tomb that had been constructed during his lifetime; impressive vestiges of such royal burials remain throughout eastern China.⁵

Even with the relatively limited evidence about kings who received a funeral during Chengdi’s reign, two trends are discernible: royal tombs from Chengdi’s reign tend to be

TABLE 13.01 Kingdoms during Chengdi's reign

	Gaozu		Wendi	Jingdi							
	CHENGYANG	ZICHUAN	LIANG	HEJIAN	LU	ZHAO	CHANGSHA	GUANGDE	JIAODONG	LU'AN	ZHENDING
33 BCE											
32 BCE				a							
31 BCE				1n					6n		
30 BCE											
29 BCE											
28 BCE									d/a		
27 BCE											
26 BCE											
25 BCE			d/a								
24 BCE											
23 BCE					d/a					d/a	
22 BCE											d/a
21 BCE											
20 BCE			l		2n						o
19 BCE	d/a/d*							a			
18 BCE								d*			
17 BCE									1n		
16 BCE	a		l								
15 BCE			1n		1n						
14 BCE			1n						d/a		
13 BCE	1n								1n		
12 BCE		1n	l						1n		
11 BCE						d/a					
10 BCE											
9 BCE		d/a									
8 BCE				3n		5n			1n		
7 BCE			cv							1n	d/a

Note: Gray areas indicate when a given kingdom was in operation; white areas indicate closure. The letter *d* indicates the death of the king (*d** if the death is mentioned in the *Basic Annals of Hanshu*); *a* indicates the accession of a new king (*a** if in the *Basic Annals of Hanshu*); *n* marks occasions when royal sons were awarded noble rank (with the numeral indicating the number of titles awarded); *l* marks recorded legal cases mounted against a king; *cv* stands for court visits; *t* stands for transfers; *T* indicates a transfer to the position of emperor. The top row lists the emperor during whose reign the royal line in question was first established.

more modest in scale than those from the first century of Western Han; and the tombs of Chengdi's more distant relatives are much poorer than those of his more immediate kin. The royal “cemetery” of the Liang kingdom in the Mangdang Mountains illustrates the first trend well. Tomb M1 at Mount Yao is tentatively identified as belonging to Liu Jia, the King of Liang who died in 25 BCE.⁶ This modest tomb consists of a single stone burial chamber measuring 5 by 7 meters. The magnificent tomb of Liu Wu (r. 168–144 BCE), the founding king of Liang, is nearby at Mount Bao'an. Comparing the two, we cannot but be struck by the great contrast and conclude that, relatively speaking, the

	Wudi			Xuandi			Yuandi			
SISHUI	GUANGYANG	GUANGLING	GAOMI	HUAIYANG	DONGPING	CHU	SHANYANG	DINGTAO	XINDU	ZHONGSHAN
							cv			
				l						
		d/a	d/a 5n		l					
				d/a	cv					
						cv 1n				
						d	t →	→ t		
						a/d*		cv		
	d/a					a			t	→ t
				1n		1n		d/a		
			d/a 1n	2n	d/a 2n					
				1n	1n					
		d*								
				1n	1n					
1n										
				1n	1n					
		a								
d/a										
								cv		cv
	1n							T/a		d/a
						cv				

glory of the Liang royal house had much declined.⁷ (Only some pieces of jade and a few bronze objects were found in the severely looted tomb at Mount Yao.)

As to the second trend, even though no tomb occupant buried during Chengdi's reign has been conclusively identified as a member of a royal line founded by Xuandi or Yuandi, archaeologists tend to attribute the larger tombs of the period to members of those very families.⁸ Given that the kings of this line were, in general, treated more generously by Chengdi than the kings from older lines,⁹ they presumably also had a larger budget at their disposal for funerary expenses. That the *Basic Annals* for Cheng-

di's reign in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) mentions the deaths of Chengdi's uncles and brothers, but not those of the other kings, also indicates how the former's deaths were deemed more significant than the deaths of kings further removed.¹⁰

Newly minted kings received from the Chang'an court a golden seal inscribed with their names.¹¹ Succeeding kings did not receive a "deed of investiture," a privilege reserved for founding kings, but they did inherit responsibility for their kingdom's altars, temples, and palace halls. In all likelihood, succeeding kings were confirmed in their own kingdom by imperial envoys and did not need to travel to Chang'an for that purpose.

Twenty regular father-son transitions marked Chengdi's reign, one or two per kingdom.¹² In the few cases where a regular transition was impossible due to lack of an heir, kings who were close kin were treated differently from more distant members of the imperial family. When one of Chengdi's great-uncles, Liu Ao, the founder of a new line of Chu kings,¹³ died in 25 or 24 BCE, he was succeeded by his son, who died soon after without a son of his own. Even though the kingdom was temporarily abolished, according to standard policy, the Chang'an court quickly intervened and the following year appointed a younger son of Liu Ao as the new King of Chu.¹⁴ In the case of the older kingdoms of Chengyang and Guangling—lines established by Gaozu and Wudi, respectively—more time elapsed between the closing of the kingdom and the appointment of another member of the line to restore the line; one to two years in the case of Chengyang, four years in the case of Guangling. In fact, what requires explanation in the cases of Chengyang and Guangling is not so much the greater time elapsed between abolition and restoration of each line but that they were reinstated at all. Previous emperors had also been quick to restore lines of close kinsmen, but they often allowed older lines to disappear, whenever a death or a legal conviction offered a convenient pretext.

Legal Cases and Punishments

From early Western Han on, kingdom officials or disgruntled men or women associated with the royal courts brought forward complaints about the behavior of the kings. In a familiar scenario, the highest officials at the central court, often the Chancellor and the Imperial Counsellor, would request a severe penalty, which would then be reduced by the emperor on grounds of kinship until both parties settled on some compromise. Already by the reigns of Xuandi and Yuandi (i.e., 74–33 BCE), kings were no longer executed or forced to commit suicide after being found guilty of a crime. Kings from these reigns were punished with formal imperial rebukes, the removal of one or more counties from their kingdoms, or, in the worst case, "exile" to distant locations in Han-zhong Commandery (e.g., Fangling or Shangyong), together with the abolition of the kingdom.¹⁵ During Chengdi's reign, it seems that use of the legal apparatus to constrain the kings was turned down a notch further. Not only were there remarkably few judicial cases involving the kings; the punishments meted out were also light, in that they never

led to the closing of a kingdom. The three kings implicated in crimes during Chengdi's reign were his uncles—the Kings of Huaiyang and Dongping—and the King of Liang, Liu Li, who had succeeded his father, the aforementioned Liu Jia, in 25 BCE.

The case of Liu Qin, King of Huaiyang, occurred early in Chengdi's reign and was, exceptionally, initiated by a move of the king himself. Two of the king's maternal uncles—together with Jing Fang, the *Changes* (*Yijing*) expert—had been executed late in Yuandi's reign, in 37 BCE, after a losing battle with the powerful eunuch Shi Xian. Liu Qin, their ally, had been rebuked for getting involved in the case, while his other maternal relatives had been exiled to the frontier. After the accession of Chengdi, Liu Qin reckoning that Shi Xian's power had already diminished and counting on his nephew's goodwill, requested that his maternal relatives be allowed to return from exile. In response, the Chancellor and the Imperial Counsellor (presumably Kuang Heng and Zhang Tan), slapped the king with the serious accusation of *lèse-majesté*.¹⁶ The king received no punishment, however, and his maternal relatives were allowed to return from exile. Another uncle of Chengdi, Liu Yu, King of Dongping, was punished for the murder of an estranged secondary wife by the mere removal of two counties from his kingdom. When two years later these same counties were restored to his kingdom on imperial orders, the accompanying edict argued that the king, as a close relative, should be treated with generosity, and it claimed that sufficient evidence existed that the king had mended his ways.¹⁷

Liu Li, the King of Liang, was a much more distant relative of Chengdi. His kingdom's officials seem to have had a difficult time controlling his behavior almost immediately upon his accession in 25 or 24 BCE. Sometime after 20 BCE, they petitioned to restrict the king's access to the resources that would normally be at his disposal, allowing him to use his carriages, horses, and funds only for ritual plowing or sacrificial performances.¹⁸ Nonetheless, Liu Li continued to abuse his officials; he also took to "leaving the palace at night on secret business." In consequence, he was punished repeatedly by a reduction of his income, each time by "five hundred to a thousand households."¹⁹ More serious legal trouble followed in the Yongshi reign period (16–13 BCE) when officials, investigating a charge that this king had slandered his in-laws, discovered that the king had had an incestuous relation with his paternal aunt. A skillful intervention by Gu Yong, then Grand Counsellor of the Palace, persuaded the emperor to let the case alone. Gu Yong, using quotations from the *Chunqiu* (*Annals*) and the *Shi* (*Odes*), argued that it was important to conceal the private affairs of the king, lest they sully the reputation of the imperial family and the court. Gu further claimed that the king's aunt was as much to blame as the king himself, and that the legal officials lacked the authority to broaden their investigation beyond an original charge of slander. Gu Yong therefore proposed to establish a special investigative commission, staffed by learned members, that would stop the legal proceedings of the regular legal administration.

While we do not learn why Gu Yong was defending Liu Li (perhaps on behalf of the Wang family?), his argument neatly captures the changing relationship between

the imperial and royal courts. As long as the emperor deemed the kingdoms useful for propagating his own virtue and achievements, it mattered less and less what the kings themselves did, or who they themselves were. The regular administrative officers, rather than being encouraged to use the law as a tool to rein in the kings, were now instructed to look the other way, so as to generate as little publicity as possible: “Soiling the reputation of the imperial clan by exhibiting its dirty laundry all over the realm is not how one preserves the *taboos* of the ruling family, augments the luster of the court, or gets the beneficial influence of your sagely virtue to shine forth.”²⁰ Gu Yong effectively declared a halt to the war that loyal court officials had been waging against the local kings—on behalf of the imperial court—for well over a century.²¹ Kings stopped being considered potential adversaries of the emperor; instead, they became seen as mere extensions of the imperial person.²²

Gu Yong’s intervention, however, did not mean the end of Liu Li’s trouble with the law. During the Yuanyan reign period (12–9 BCE), five counties were cut from the Liang kingdom because Liu Li was involved in numerous assaults and murders, and during Aidi’s reign the king was forced to commit suicide.²³

Court Visits

As Master Chu (fl. 50 BCE) tells us in one of his additions to the *Shiji* (*Archivists’ Record*), Han regulations stipulated that kings visit the Chang’an court once every ten years. These court visits coincided with the New Year’s celebrations, and during each visit the kings were received five times by the emperor.

When the kings first arrived, they appeared for an informal audience. On the morning of New Year’s day, they formally presented the emperor with deerskins and *bi* jades to convey their New Year’s wishes. After three days, the kings were treated to a banquet and received gifts of gold and other valuables. Two days later, there was another informal audience, after which they took their leave. In all they did not stay in Chang’an for more than twenty days. In an informal audience, the kings were received within the forbidden gate and they feasted in the inner sanctum, a place to which regular men of service had no access.²⁴ We know from other sources that each kingdom had a residence in the capital, presumably situated in the first-class residential area north of the Weiyang Palace, for use during court visits.²⁵

The *Hanshu* does not routinely note court visits, mentioning them only in passing when they are relevant to another story. One such mention concerns a 7 BCE visit by Liu Li, the King of Liang, together with Liu Yan, King of Chu (r. 23–2 BCE). The record notes that they were to appear at court for their farewell reception the same morning Chengdi died, and that “those on night duty had already set out tents [for a banquet] at White Tiger Hall.”²⁶ This record confirms the part of Master Chu’s account that states that the kings were to be received just prior to their departure for an “informal” farewell audience in the inner precincts of the palace.²⁷ Notably, Liu Li’s recent conviction and

punishment did not prevent him from partaking in a statutory court visit; he seems to have made his court-appointed visit at the same time as the King of Chu, a grandson of Xuandi, who was much more closely related to Chengdi. If, as Master Chu claims, the kings were indeed expected for a court visit once a decade, and there were eighteen to twenty kingdoms in existence at any one time during Chengdi's reign, probably two kings on average visited the central court in any given year. That the Kings of Liang and Chu visited together might be explained by the relative geographical proximity of their kingdoms, which in turn raises the possibility that they also traveled together.²⁸

We have records of three more court visits during the first decade of Chengdi's reign. The 26 BCE visit by Liu Ao, King of Chu, is noted because the king, Chengdi's uncle, fell ill during his court visit, which prompted the emperor to issue an edict lauding the king's exemplary filial behavior. Henceforth, the king was to be allowed the signal honor of bringing his son to future court audiences. Twice, during the kings' court visits in 27 and in 24 BCE, Wang Feng (d. 22 BCE), Chengdi's powerful maternal uncle, thwarted the ambitions of Liu Yu (King of Dongping) and Liu Kang (King of Dingtao),²⁹ Chengdi's uncle and brother, respectively; he even thwarted those of the emperor himself. When Liu Yu requested copies of the *Shiji* and masters' texts during his visit of 27 BCE, Wang Feng urged the emperor to refuse the king's request (see van Ess's chapter in this volume).³⁰ Liu Kang was Yuandi's favored son and had several times come close to being appointed imperial heir in place of the future Chengdi. Upon Chengdi's accession he was promptly sent to his kingdom. Chengdi, who must have known Liu Kang well on a personal basis, treated him well and wanted to keep Liu Kang close to him beyond the period normally allowed for a court visit. Wang Feng used a solar eclipse to protest this idea.³¹ See chapter 12.

Most likely the court visits in 9 BCE of Liu Xin (King of Dingtao) and Liu Xing (King of Zhongshan) were not regular court visits, but occasions for the court to settle the question of imperial succession by personally interviewing the two kings as potential successors to Chengdi. Ultimately it was Liu Xin who, in 8 BCE, was appointed heir apparent, whereas Liu Xing's kingdom was expanded as a form of compensation.

Noble Ranks for Royal Sons

Given their many wives, the kings often had numerous sons. During Chengdi's reign, as during those of his predecessors, these princes were routinely ennobled.³² Such ennoblements often took place in groups (many times involving several sons of the same king, either heirs of the living king or of one of his predecessors). Moreover, new noble titles were assigned just as often to distant lines as to closer ones, and often, after the accession of a new king, one of his siblings was ennobled (in compensation?). The greatest number of princes were ennobled in the second year of Chengdi's reign, as in the second year of Yuandi's reign (47 BCE) and the second year of Xuandi's reign (73 BCE). Apparently, ennobling princes was one of the measures expected of a new emperor, so

as to initiate good relations between the central court and the courts of the kings.

During Wudi's reign, the ennoblement of princes was part of a cynical policy, called "extending generosity," designed to quickly reduce the territories of the kingdoms. According to this policy, proposed by Zhufu Yan (fl. 126 BCE), the kings were to divide some of their own lands for the ennoblement of all their legitimate sons. Thus, while an emperor would appear to be generous toward the royal princes, he was in fact nibbling away at the kings' territories.³³ By Chengdi's reign, the situation was significantly different. Royal princes were still ennobled, often in large numbers, but their territories were almost always located on commandery lands, usually in counties designated in the geographical treatise of the *Hanshu* as "Noble's Domain," often in close proximity to the kingdom of origin.³⁴ This did not necessarily mean that, with each ennoblement, the central court gave up the entire income hitherto drawn from its centrally administered lands, even though there were apparently such cases. Noble lines—including those of high officials or awarded to members of the distaff families—tended to get extinguished relatively quickly, so that usually there was some recently vacated noble rank available to bestow. Whereas many nobles preferred to live in the capital rather than on their estates, it seems likely that the princes usually lived in the domains assigned to them. These lands seem to have been deliberately chosen to lie in relative proximity to the prince's kingdom; in addition, without sons moving out on a regular basis, the royal palaces would have become very crowded over time, marked by much strife among siblings.

Restorations and Classicism

In the second year of Chengdi's reign, Liu Liang was appointed King of Hejian. The kingdom of Hejian had been closed for almost a decade before being restored, its temporary closure occasioned by the conviction for criminal behavior of its last king, Liu Yuan (r. 54–38), and his exile to Fangling. Liu Liang was a younger brother of the last King of Hejian; at the time of his appointment, he was serving as Director of Stores in Shang Commandery.³⁵ Certainly, Chengdi was under no obligation to restore the kingdom, and that he decided to do so must hold some significance. The most obvious way to interpret the restoration of Hejian is as a beneficent gesture of the new emperor toward the kings, signaling that Chengdi would respect the sanctity of the royal lines and ensure that sacrifices to the founder of a line continued. Yuandi had similarly restored an abolished royal line early in his reign, and hence Chengdi might simply have been following the precedent set by his father.³⁶

More may have been at stake in the decision to restore Hejian, given that the founding King of Hejian was Liu De (r. 155–130/129 BCE). Michael Loewe has noted that "the *Hanshu* provides a fuller account of Liu De than the *Shiji*."³⁷ The *Shiji* merely mentions the king's love for classical learning and relates that his penchant to act and dress like a classicist attracted many learned men to his court.³⁸ The *Hanshu*, by contrast, portrays

the king in several related roles: as an avid book collector who discovered copies of texts such as the *Zhouguan* (*Offices of Zhou*), the *Documents* (*Shangshu*), the *Rites* (*Li*), the *Rites Record* (*Liji*), the *Mengzi*, and the *Laozi*; as a visionary who installed Academicians at his court in the Mao tradition of the *Odes* and the *Zuo Traditions* of the *Annals*; as an adviser to Wudi on ritual architecture;³⁹ as a collector of Zhou-era music and author of a treatise on music;⁴⁰ and as an author of a text on Zhou institutions.⁴¹

Perhaps most significant of all, the *Hanshu* expands a *Shiji* portrayal of Liu De as “fond of classical learning,” pronouncing Liu De to be “an accomplished scholar who was fond of antiquity.”⁴² The expression “antiquity-loving” (*hao gu*) is a catchphrase in the *Hanshu* for those who sought, from around 50 BCE onward, to establish the Western Han dynasty on a new ideological footing, distinguishing it from its roots in the Qin imperial period, to realign it with the traditions of early Western Zhou (ca. 1040–900 BCE). We know that this *hao gu* movement scored important victories in ritual matters in the first years of Chengdi’s reign, when Kuang Heng was Chancellor and Zhang Tan Imperial Counsellor—before both were dismissed in 30 BCE.⁴³ (See Tian Tian’s chapter in this volume.) So, quite possibly, the restoration of the Hejian kingdom in 32 BCE signaled, not only the new regime’s general commitment to the kings, but also the emperor’s commitment to the “restore antiquity” movement, with the King of Hejian cast as the movement’s precursor.

No evidence establishes an explicit link between the desire to honor the memory of Liu De and the restoration of the Hejian kingdom, but the respect of Chengdi’s court for Liu De is clear.⁴⁴ In an unspecified year, when the Academician Ping Dang sought to counter the decadent musical tastes favored at Chengdi’s court, he lauded the role of the kingdom of Hejian in preserving classical musical traditions: “Hejian, in all its insignificance as a small country belonging to a mere vassal, was able to preserve important traditions, due to its love of learning and its cultivation of antiquity.”⁴⁵ Liu Xiang’s (79/78–8 BCE) *Shuiyuan* (*Profusion of Persuasions*, presented to the throne in 17 BCE) ascribes several learned sayings to the King of Hejian.⁴⁶ Given Liu De’s posthumous reputation, someone at court may well have invoked the intellectual debts the Chang’an court owed to Hejian and argued for the kingdom’s restoration as a symbolic gesture at the start of Chengdi’s reign.

Hejian was not the only kingdom restored during Chengdi’s reign. Guangde in 19 BCE, Chengyang in 16 BCE, and Guangling in 11 BCE followed in due course.⁴⁷ Possibly the restored kingdoms benefited from the growing efforts to distance the Western Han ruling house from the legacy of Qin, efforts that seem closely linked with the “restore antiquity” movement.⁴⁸ Indeed, in the *Shiji* accounts some decades earlier, the institution of *zhuhouwang* was explicitly associated with the Zhou example, and its use separated Western Han from Qin. This may explain why Yuandi and Chengdi saw the need to preserve individual kingdoms and royal lines.⁴⁹

The case of Guangling, the kingdom initially restored by Yuandi early in his reign, is relatively straightforward. After its restoration in 47 BCE, the second king of the

restored line died without an heir in 16 BCE. After a lapse of four years, in 11 BCE the kingdom was restored by installing another son of the first king of the restored line.⁵⁰ Guangde presented a different case, as that tiny kingdom in the far south was newly created in 19 BCE. It continued, in a different location, the royal line founded for Liu Sheng, King of Zhongshan (r. 154–112 BCE), who is buried in the now famous tomb at Mancheng (Hebei). Liu Sheng's line had died out by 54 BCE, under Xuandi's reign; and the kingdom of Zhongshan had been assigned to one of Xuandi's sons in either 45 or 43 BCE, during Yuandi's reign.⁵¹ In 23 BCE, Chengdi had transferred Liu Xing, his own brother, to Zhongshan, for reasons not well understood. Perhaps the creation of the kingdom of Guangde in 19 BCE for a distant descendant of Liu Sheng was meant to compensate Liu Sheng's line for the loss of its ancestral territory. In any case, the newly established kingdom of Guangde survived for only two years. After its first king died without an heir, it was, quite exceptionally for Chengdi's reign, not restored.

Restorations: Balancing Powerful Families

Consort families, particularly the Wang family, played an enormous role in the political decision-making processes during Chengdi's reign. It is only logical to assume that they would have sought to counter efforts to strengthen the position of the kingdoms, as the kings were all members of the Liu family. This may be why Wang Feng forbade the King of Dingtao to linger in Chang'an longer than the statutes on court visits allowed, or why he refused the King of Dongping's request for books. Still, these consort families would also have been acutely aware of the need never to create the impression that they were overstepping their bounds and infringing upon the Liu imperial clan. They might also have supported measures that benefited members of the Liu family to thwart the ambition of rival consort families.⁵²

A desire to balance the claims of rival families likely played a role in the restoration of the kingdom of Chengyang in 16 BCE. This small but very old kingdom was abolished in 18 BCE when its last king died shortly after his accession without an heir. That it was reinstated at all, and that this happened in 16 BCE, may have to do with the ascent of a new consort family that same year and with the consequent realignment of power. As the *Hanshu's Basic Annals* tells us, the restoration of Chengyang happened in the seventh month of the same year in which Zhao Feiyan's father, Zhao Lin, was ennobled—the same year that Wang Mang became Noble of Xindu and that Zhao Feiyan herself was elevated to the position of Chengdi's empress.⁵³

Liu Fu, an Advisory Counsellor at the central court and a member of the Hejian branch of the imperial family,⁵⁴ delivered to Chengdi a sharply worded rebuke after the ennoblement of Zhao Feiyan's father (in the fourth month) but before Zhao Feiyan was made empress (in the sixth month). Liu Fu bluntly argued that it was inherently wrong to promote someone of low background, evoking a proverb that compared such a promotion to making a pillar out of rotten wood. He then accused the emperor of

giving in to his private passions to make a lowborn woman into the “mother of all-under-Heaven.”⁵⁵ Given that Chengdi was still without heir, and he was reigning during the perceived “waning days” of the dynasty, a time beset with multiple bad omens,⁵⁶ Chengdi should give his all for his ancestral lineage, and rely on divination to choose a worthier lady to produce offspring. Liu Fu ended by saying that since he had been selected for office as a member of the imperial family (“of the same surname,” *tongxing*), he—more than men outside the imperial family—was obligated to offer frank remonstrations.⁵⁷

Chengdi immediately had Liu Fu thrown in a secret prison attached to the women’s sleeping apartments, so that he would not have to charge him publicly with a crime, because public charges would reveal the contents of Liu Fu’s remonstrations. Several prominent politicians (Gu Yong, Shi Dan, and Xin Qingji among them) came to Liu Fu’s defense. They registered their surprise that a member of the imperial family had been thrown into a secret prison, particularly as he had only been recently promoted and so might yet be unfamiliar with all of the court protocols. They further suggested that he should be given a public trial, lest other Courtiers fear the same fate and stop offering honest remonstrations. As a result, Liu Fu was turned over to the regular legal administrative officers; he received an initial sentence of hard labor, after which he lived out his years at home.⁵⁸

Liu Fu’s remonstrations, perhaps because its contents had become known at court, apparently had some impact. The emperor carried through with his plans to make Zhao Feiyan empress, but he might have realized that he needed to counterbalance his partiality to the Zhao family with a measure of favor toward his paternal family. After all, Liu Fu had plainly pointed out his duty to the Liu imperial lineage. The restoration of the Chengyang kingdom (as well as, perhaps, the noble rank granted to Wang Mang) could well have been just such a reconciliatory measure. Not only did the restoration come one month after Zhao Feiyan was made empress; it is striking that the Noble’s Domain granted to Zhao Lin a few months earlier was also called Chengyang.⁵⁹ That the formerly lapsed kingdom and the noble title given to Zhao Lin were homonyms might have further enhanced the symbolic value of the restoration.

Preparing for Succession

The anxiety about Chengdi’s failure to produce an heir colored interactions with the kings from the beginning of Chengdi’s reign, particularly with Chengdi’s brothers and uncles. When in 24 BCE an ailing Chengdi tried to persuade Liu Kang, the King of Dingtao, to extend his court visit of 24 BCE, Chengdi raised the issue: “I do not yet have a son, and life is such that the unspeakable can happen anytime. If death snatches me away, this will have been our last meeting. Please stay longer to keep me company!”⁶⁰

Ultimately the son of Liu Kang was chosen to become the next imperial heir.⁶¹ The choice was not uncontroversial, as Liu Xin had a rival in Chengdi’s half brother, Liu

Xing, King of Zhongshan. Liu Kang's mother, née Fu, who had moved upon Chengdi's accession with her son to his appointed kingdoms (first Shanyang, then Dingtao), had lobbied heavily for the nomination of her grandson. Moreover, she had managed to secure the support of both the Zhao and Wang families for her grandson's candidacy.⁶² Both candidates were summoned to a court visit in 9 BCE. Liu Xing was found wanting, compared to his seventeen-year-old nephew, for Liu Xing was unable to explain why he had only brought part of his retinue with him to Chang'an; Liu Xin had not only brought his full retinue but was also able to explain that he did so to comply with the Han ordinances relating to the *zhuhouwang*. In addition, while Liu Xing stumbled when asked to recite from the *Documents*, Liu Xin brilliantly displayed his mastery of the *Odes*. Worse still, Liu Xing had abominable table manners.⁶³ A final decision to appoint Liu Xin heir was made after a council meeting (*yi*) in the inner recesses of the palace, where, except for Imperial Counsellor Kong Guang, all present argued in favor of Liu Xin's candidacy. Whereas Kong Guang invoked the *Documents* to argue that a legitimate succession takes place from older to younger brother, his colleagues (led by Chancellor Zhai Fangjin) countered by using a sentence from one of the *Rites* classics to support the notion of legitimate succession to a new generation.⁶⁴ The installation of Liu Xin as imperial heir in 8 BCE was accompanied by gifts of gold to all the kings and nobles.⁶⁵

The 8 BCE Administrative Reforms and the Kingdoms

The 8 BCE administrative reforms initiated by Zhai Fangjin and He Wu (discussed at length in Habberstad's chapter in this volume) affected the kingdoms insofar as they redefined the role of the kingdoms' Chancellors and Commandants (Zhongwei).⁶⁶ According to the state of affairs that Chengdi inherited, the Chancellor, Tutor, and Commandant, ranking at 2,000 bushels each, served as the king's personal officers. Chiefly responsible for guiding the kings' moral and ritual behavior, they did not partake in governing the kingdom. The task of governing the kingdom was assigned to the Neishi, also ranked at 2,000 bushels; he appears to have been seen as an agent of the central government, not an official appointed by the king.⁶⁷ The reforms carried out at the end of Chengdi's reign changed this entire arrangement. The position of Neishi was abolished, his tasks divided between each kingdom's Chancellor and Commandant (Zhongwei), whose functions mirrored those of Governor (Shou) and Commandant (Duwei) in a Western Han commandery.

The 8 BCE reforms generally rationalized an adaptation to a changed administrative reality. The term "rationalization" also applies to the reforms that reorganized the administration of the kingdoms. From the perspective of the central court, the reforms resulted in greater transparency because the kingdoms and commanderies were now, titles aside, administered in exactly the same way. Moreover, posts like that of the Chancellor (now the administrative equivalent of a Governor) and the Commandant

(Zhongwei, now equivalent to the Duwei in the commanderies) acquired real administrative content rather than being expensive “empty” posts. For their incumbents, particularly the kingdom Chancellors, the reforms were advantageous too. The Chancellors could gain real administrative experience on par with most commandery Governors, aside from the important commanderies closer to the capital. Indeed, before the reforms, the position of Chancellor in a kingdom was not a particularly attractive post, as the Chancellor served at the whims of the king but was at the same time held responsible for the king’s misbehavior.⁶⁸ Even from the perspective of the kings, the changes might have been an improvement. While the posts of Chancellor and Commandant were preserved in name, these officials would now be occupied with administrative matters, with consequently less time to survey the behavior of the kings.⁶⁹ That risky task would henceforth fall solely to the kings’ tutors.⁷⁰

Conclusion

The 8 BCE reforms, as they affected the kingdoms, were the culmination of a long process in which administrative responsibility for the “area east of the passes” was transferred from the royal courts to the central court at Chang’an. The reforms made it plain that the royal courts had lost sovereignty over their territories and were now part of the regular administration that was centered in Chang’an. Also in cultural terms, the royal courts of Chengdi’s time lost the distinctiveness they had possessed a century earlier. The kings, as demonstrated by the case of Liu Yu, King of Dongping, were reduced to asking the central court for access to certain books. Once their tutors were sent from Chang’an to educate the kings in the *Odes* and other court-approved texts, the kings were turned into recipients, rather than producers, of culture. The imperial communications sent to the kingdoms from Chang’an relentlessly stress the importance of filial piety, often admonishing members of the royal courts via the language of the *Xiaojing* (*Classic of Filial Piety*) and the *Lunyu* (*Analects*).

Kings of distant lines would have lived out their lives in their kingdoms, knowing Chang’an only from an occasional court visit. Kings from lines founded by Xuandi and Yuandi, however, often had spent their childhoods in Chang’an and, through both their maternal and paternal relatives, maintained much closer ties with the capital city. The historian has the distinct impression that for these kings Chang’an was the place to be, and they would not have chosen a life in the outlying kingdoms for themselves for any reason. This sentiment is perhaps best expressed in a legend that grew up around the tomb of Liu Yu, King of Dongping, which was transcribed in a Wei (220–265 CE) dynasty text. According to that legend, the pine trees planted on Liu Yu’s tomb mound all tilted toward the west, expressing the longing of the king buried underneath to return to the Chang’an capital.⁷¹

Despite these trends, one can also discern a revival of the kingdoms during Chengdi’s reign. This revival, most plainly seen in the central court’s efforts to maintain royal

lines (even those where there was no regular heir) and in its lenient attitude toward kings accused of crimes, was perhaps a by-product of important changes taking place at Chengdi's Chang'an court. Policy toward the kingdoms fit well within the central court's broader strategy, part of the so-called classical turn, by which the imperial court aimed to align itself with early Western Zhou heritage and thereby distance itself from Qin. The kings were also increasingly seen as one of the distinctive contributions to history made by the ruling Han Liu house, and thus an important part of the legacy of the Han founder. As Gu Yong put it, the kingdoms served "to augment the luster of the central court."⁷²

Notes

- 1 Some scholars prefer to designate the *zhuhouwang* from the time of Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE) onward as "princes" rather than "kings," in part because after 195 BCE the title of *wang* was given exclusively to imperial sons (or their descendants) who did not qualify for imperial succession, but mostly because the *wang* had lost virtually all powers of government over their territories in the decades following the Seven Kingdoms Rebellion of 154 BCE. However, the fact that for the entire Western Han period the *zhuhouwang* were endowed with kingdoms and actually resided in their territories distinguishes them from the imperial sons (and their descendants) who, from Sui times (581–618 CE) onward, only received nominal titles to land while they remained in the capital. I therefore prefer to call a *wang* "king," reserving the word "prince" for the sons of the kings (*wangzi*).
- 2 The territories of Changsha and Lu'an was much larger than that of the other kingdoms, not surprising given their location in the south, still very much a frontier area. Jiaodong and Gaomi seem to have bordered on one another; also Shanyang, Liu Kang's kingdom, shared borders with three kingdoms (Liang, Dongping, and Chengyang), creating a small belt of kingdoms.
- 3 Ying Shao (d. ca. 203), *Han guanyi*, *juan* 2, cited in *Hanguan liuzhong*, 134. These documents were likely the direct sources for the materials contained in the histories on the kings, together with the genealogical registers of the Liu imperial house, which were compiled by the Commissioner of the Imperial Clan, one of the Nine Ministers. On the compilation of these registers, see Wang Long's (fl. 25–57 CE), *Hanguan*, annotated by Hu Guang (91–172), in *Hanguan liuzhong*, 15.
- 4 Wei Hong's (fl. 25 CE) *Han jiuyi bu yi*, cited in *Hanguan liuzhong*, 105, 106.
- 5 Liu and Liu 2010.
- 6 In many cases they were built into existing mountains, but on flat terrain a man-made mount would have been provided.
- 7 Liu and Liu 2010, 179–82 (for the tombs at Mount Yao), 150–76 (for the tombs of Liu Wu and the equally splendid tombs attributed to his wives).
- 8 A good example is a large Han tomb being excavated in Dingtao county, Shandong, since 2010. The tomb, a splendid example of a *huangchang ticou*-style tomb (i.e., a tomb constructed with large, horizontally stacked wooden beams), consists of three main tomb chambers and numerous side chambers that together measure about 23 by 23 meters. The excavators speculate that the tomb occupant is Liu Kang of Dingtao (r. 25–23 CE), but Liu Rui has sought to widen the field of possible tomb occupants to include Liu Kang's successor, Liu Xin (the future Aidi who reigned as King of Dingtao from 22–8 BCE) and also earlier kings. See Liu Rui 2012. The tomb was presumed to be entirely devoid of objects until September 2012, when a bamboo box

- containing a silk robe with a sown-in jade disk was found under the floor of the tomb chamber. This has led some to speculate that the tomb belonged to a female, perhaps Lady Ding, Aidi's mother and Liu Kang's wife. For a news report on this find, see *Xinminwang* 新民國, April 19, 2013, <http://news.xinmin.cn/shehui/2013/04/19/19819448.html>.
- 9 *Hanshu* 50.3318, 80.4059.
 - 10 *Hanshu* 10.311, 313, 315, 329. Interestingly the *Basic Annals* does not mention the death of Chengdi's uncle Liu Qin, the King of Huaiyang, who died in 27 BCE; also not mentioned is the death of Chengdi's cousin Liu Wen in 23 BCE, who had succeeded his father as King of Chu for a year or less before he died and was succeeded by a brother.
 - 11 Wei Hong's *Hanguan jiuyi bu yi*, in *Hanguan liuzhong*, 55; Wei Hong's *Han jiuyi bu yi*, in *Hanguan liuzhong*, 93.
 - 12 Only in the kingdom of Changsha was the same king on the throne for Chengdi's entire reign period.
 - 13 From 201 to 69 BCE, another line of Liu kings, from which Liu Xiang descended, had held Chu.
 - 14 *Hanshu* 80.3319–20. According to *Hanshu* 14.422, Liu Ao's first son was established as his successor in 24 BCE, to be succeeded himself by his younger brother in 23 BCE.
 - 15 *Hanshu* 14.409, 415.
 - 16 This identification, while likely, is not certain. Kuang Heng was Chancellor from 36 to 30 BCE; Zhang Tan, Imperial Counsellor from 32 to 30 BCE. The biography of Liu Qin merely says that he submitted his request "after Chengdi had become emperor." See *Hanshu* 50.3318.
 - 17 *Hanshu* 10.306, 80.3323–24.
 - 18 *Hanshu* 47.2215.
 - 19 *Hanshu* 47.2215–16.
 - 20 *Hanshu* 47.2216
 - 21 Especially after the Seven Kingdoms Rebellion in 154 BCE, officials used legal investigations to curtail the power of the kings and were, as in the case of the King of Huainan's alleged rebellion in 122 BCE, especially watchful for signs of subversion on the part of the kings, creating what I elsewhere call "a triangle of power." See Vankeerberghen 2001, 36–61; also Vankeerberghen 2013.
 - 22 *Hanshu* 47.2215–17.
 - 23 *Hanshu* 47.2217–20.
 - 24 *Shiji* 58.2090–91.
 - 25 Wang Shejiao 2009, 115–22.
 - 26 On White Tiger Hall, see Xu Weimin 2008b, 68–69, and He Qinggu 2005, 118n5.
 - 27 However, given that the day of Chengdi's death was seventy-six days after New Year's day, the kings must either have come after New Year's or must have stayed longer than the maximum of twenty days stipulated in Chu Shaosun's account; the seventy-six days are calculated based on the Dharma Drum Buddhist College Time Authority Database (whose website is <http://authority.ddbc.edu.tw/time/>), which converts New Year's day of the second year of the Suihe period to January 29, 6 BCE (or day 1,718,897), and the death of Chengdi on the *bingxu* (day 23) of the third lunar month to April 15 of the same year (or day 1,718,973).
 - 28 Among the Dingxian bamboo strips discovered in 1973, at Bajiaolang M40 in Ding county (now Dingzhou city, Hebei), is an unpublished account of the court visit of Liu Ding, King of Lu'an (r. 73–50), made in 56 BCE, entitled "Lu'an wang chao wufeng er nian zhengyue qiju ji." See *Wenwu* 1995, 38; cf. *Wenwu* 1981a. Unfortunately, the original bamboo strips have so badly decayed that they are no longer legible; worse still, the transcription made of the text in the 1970s is in private hands and hence unavailable to other scholars (Hou Xudong, personal communication, May 2012). However, that protracted interactions between kings were generally discouraged might speak against the possibility of kings traveling together.

- 29 Liu Kang was transferred from Shanyang to Dingtao in 25 BCE, and Wang Feng called him King of Dingtao when Wang addressed the emperor. Hence the visit, barring later editorial intervention, must have taken place after 25 BCE. This is confirmed by the solar eclipse, which took place in 24 BCE. See *Hanshu* 10.311, 14.423, 80.3327, 98.4019.
- 30 *Hanshu* 80.3324–25.
- 31 *Hanshu* 98.4019.
- 32 Most of our information on the princes is derived from *Hanshu* 15, “Table of the Ennobled Royal Princes”; they and their sisters (who also received titles and estates) are only occasionally mentioned in other parts of the histories. For a general overview of noble ranks during Western Han, see Loewe 2004, 279–324.
- 33 *Hanshu* 15A.427, 64A.2802; Zhou Zhenhe 2005, 47.
- 34 Wang Hui 1984, 317–26, painstakingly seeks to determine the location of each of these nobilities. CHOC, 158, maintains that this same situation already prevailed under Wudi, and that the policy weakened the power of the kings not by taking away their territories but by placing their ennobled male relatives under the supervision of commandery officials. See also Loewe 2004, 390.
- 35 *Hanshu* 53.2412. That Liu Liang was serving in the northern commandery of Shang is significant, as members of the imperial house were not allowed to serve in the three major commanderies in the Guandong area (i.e., the commanderies of Henei, Henan, and Hedong). Cf. *Hanshu* 36.1972.
- 36 Soon after Yuandi became emperor, he installed Liu Ba as the new King of Guangling. By appointing Liu Ba, Yuandi restored the line of the founding King of Guangling, Liu Xu, whose kingdom had been closed in 54 BCE, after Liu Xu, a son of Wudi, confessed to uttering imprecations and committed suicide. See *Hanshu* 9.281, 63.2763.
- 37 Loewe 2000, 290.
- 38 *Shiji* 59.2093–94.
- 39 *Hanshu* 53.2410–12. The king advised Wudi on the so-called Sanyong Gong, identified by Ying Shao as the Circular Moat, Devotional Hall, and Luminous Terrace (*Hanshu* 53.2411 n1). *Hanshu* 30.1726 lists the king as the author of a text on architecture.
- 40 *Hanshu* 30.1711–12, 22.1070–72; Loewe 1974, 193–210, esp. 207.
- 41 *Hanshu* 30.1725 lists the king as an author on Zhou institutions.
- 42 *Hanshu* 53.2410.
- 43 That Kuang Heng and Zhang Tan might have been the ones who slapped Liu Qin, King of Huaiyang, with serious charges after he petitioned to have his maternal relatives return from exile (see above), does not necessarily contradict this. Using the kingdoms as advertisement does not preclude tight control over their governance.
- 44 This does not mean that the portrait of Liu De, as provided in the *Hanshu*, had already been completely fleshed out by 33 BCE; this may have been a relatively slow process of accretion.
- 45 Ping Dang’s recommendations were not accepted at this moment, but the Music Bureau, which promoted the decadent music Ping Dang opposed, was abolished in 7 BCE, not long after Chengdi’s death.
- 46 There are two passages in chapter 1 (“Jundao”) and two in chapter 3 (“Jian ben”). See *Shuiyuan jiaozheng*, 5, 7–8, 69–70, 73 (Xiang Zonglu 1987).
- 47 That the four restorations are the only accessions mentioned in the *Basic Annals* for Chengdi’s reign highlights the importance of these restorations. See *Hanshu* 10.303, 318, 320, 327.
- 48 Nylan, forthcoming b.
- 49 Michael Loewe, in his assessment of the exchanges involved in establishing three of Wudi’s sons as kings in 117 BCE, maintains that “neither the memorials, nor the decrees betray a nostalgic feeling or measure of respect for the system of the kings of Zhou.” Loewe 2004, 418. That the

- impulse to honor the Zhou example by restoring kingdoms became strong only late in Western Han makes sense; the trend continued during Pingdi's reign (1 BCE–6 CE), under Wang Mang's supervision. Cf. *Shiji* 6.238–39, 17.801.
- 50 *Hanshu* 63.2762–63.
- 51 *Hanshu* 80.3326 contradicts *Hanshu* 14.423, which says that Liu Jing moved in his fifth year (i.e., 43 BCE) rather than his third year (i.e., 45 BCE).
- 52 This is brought home splendidly in a conversation between Huo Guang and an anonymous interlocutor in *Hanshu* 36.1926.
- 53 *Hanshu* 10.319–20.
- 54 He was first a district magistrate, but was promoted after sending a letter to the emperor expounding his views.
- 55 *Hanshu* 77.3252.
- 56 See Liu Tseng-kuei's chapter in this volume for more on the doomsday thinking prevalent in late Western Han.
- 57 *Hanshu* 77.3251–52.
- 58 *Hanshu* 77.3252–54.
- 59 Zhao Lin's domain of Chengyang was in Runan Commandery. See *Hanshu* 28A.1561–62; Wang Hui 1984, 352. The year 16 BCE was also the very year that the imperial tomb at Changling was abandoned (the edict announcing that decision came in the same month as the restoration of the kingdom of Chengyang). Perhaps this decision was also part of the compensatory measures after the promotion of the Zhao family members. Liu Xiang, also a member of the imperial clan, in his influential letter of protest against building the imperial tomb at Changling, had evoked the emperor's duty to "add glory to the achievements of the Liu clan"; *Hanshu* 36.1956 gives the text of this). One of the most striking arguments Liu Xiang advanced was that low (*bei* 卑) ground had to be artificially turned into high ground; this may, perhaps, be seen as parallel to Zhao Feiyan's promotion from the lowest (also *bei* 卑) to the highest rungs of society. See *Hanshu* 36.1956–58. In *Qian Hanji*, the two *bei* 卑 are written with the same character. See *Liang Hanji*, *juan* 3, *pian* 26, 455–58.
- 60 *Hanshu* 98.4019. Wang Zhang's rebuke of Wang Feng, who invoked a solar eclipse to persuade the emperor to send the king home, makes quite explicit Chengdi's desire to have his brother succeed him: "The emperor had not yet produced an heir and therefore wanted to keep the King of Dingtao at his side." *Hanshu* 98.4020. The king, in any event, died in 23 BCE, well before Chengdi.
- 61 Liu Xin succeeded as King of Dingtao in 23 BCE, became imperial heir in 8 BCE, and acceded as Emperor Ai in 7 BCE.
- 62 *Hanshu* 11.333–34, 81.2256–57.
- 63 *Hanshu* 11.333.
- 64 *Hanshu* 81.2256–57; they quoted a passage from the "Sang fu" chapter of the *Yili*.
- 65 *Hanshu* 10.328.
- 66 Bielenstein 1980, 105–7.
- 67 Wei Hong's *Hanguan jiuyi*, 48.
- 68 *Hanshu* 72.3066 recounts how Wang Ji, who had barely escaped the death penalty in the service of a king, counseled his sons and grandsons "not to serve as an official in a kingdom."
- 69 Wei Hong reports that after the reform the Chancellor and the Commandant frequently were at odds with one another. See Wei's *Hanguan jiuyi*, 48.
- 70 Judging from the history of the *zhuhouwang* in Eastern Han (25–220 CE), it seems that the Regional Inspectors, whose role and status were enhanced by the reforms, took on the role played by the Chancellors in Western Han. Certainly, in Eastern Han it was the Regional Inspectors who most often memorialized a king's crimes.

- 71 *Hanshu* 80.3325–26n1. Yan Shigu's (581–645 CE) note attributes the tradition to the encyclopedia *Huang Lan*, which was written on behalf of Cao Pi (187–226 CE), when he was first emperor of the Wei dynasty.
- 72 *Hanshu* 47.2216, as quoted above.

PART 3

Leading Figures in Late Western Han

IN 26 BCE LIU XIANG, ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED CLASSICISTS OF THE time and a member of the imperial family, started work in the imperial archives, heading a team that collated, catalogued, and sometimes substantially revised the manuscripts deposited there. Part 3 looks more closely at the figures and trends tied to this imperial project, while suggesting the enormous impact the project had on certain endeavors, including historiography and revised understandings of the technical arts. Toward the end of Chengdi's reign, an imperial order commissioned the "continuation" of the monumental history by Sima Qian, the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*, comp. ca. 90 BCE). Apparently before Chengdi's reign (or possibly that of his father), those wishing to consult Sima Qian's famous history had to content themselves with reading a few individual chapters that circulated privately. Chengdi's order made the telling of the story of the ruling house a matter of official concern, perhaps under the influence of Liu Xiang and Yang Xiong, who publicly championed Sima Qian as a fine historian, presumably because they enjoyed access to a more complete copy of Sima Qian's narrative stored in the imperial library. Liu Xin (Liu Xiang's son) tried (but ultimately failed) to secure imperial sponsorship for the *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo Traditions*) celebrated by many of those in the *hao gu* (antiquity-loving) movement. Meanwhile, healing practices also began to cohere into self-conscious medical traditions, based more on textual than oral sources. The impact of the library on classical learning and classicizing rhetoric is perhaps the clearest. The purported "rediscovery" in the archives of the *Zuo Traditions* led to open conflicts with proponents of rival interpretations of the *Annals* (*Chunqiu*), as is well known. That rediscovery in turn spurred a recasting of the role of the Western Han dynasty within history itself, even as it inspired poetic musings on lives spent in exile or in reclusion.

Liu Xiang and Liu Xin

Michael Loewe 魯惟一

Introduction

Only a select few of the thirty thousand officials who staffed the offices of the central government in Chang'an were of sufficient seniority to be a party to major decisions of policy. Only those few had opportunities to question whether policy decisions were just. Among those few, some may have been subject to a conflict of loyalties, if, for example, an official believed that the decisions taken by the emperor or his immediate advisors flouted his own ideas of what was best. Some owed their positions to the sponsorship of a high-ranking official (often a relative or family ally), whom they might later see falsely accused of a crime and sentenced to disgrace or death. Should they nonetheless continue to serve, or leave official service, or even contrive to avenge their benefactor? And if one's own patron and allies had fallen out of favor, might one also fall with him, due to guilt by association or colleagues' enmities and rivalries? Some officials may have lived through a change of dynasty, from Western Han to Xin or from Xin back to Han. Did duty call a man to continue with his work, in the interests of the safety and well-being of the population, or should he rise up in rebellion against the new rulers, out of loyalty to his past masters?

Occasions when an official might wish to protest or offer criticism of a superior—even the highest in the land—could arise easily enough. As seen in the boldness of Gu Yong, an official might speak his mind with the help of several rhetorical devices (see the translation of one of Gu's memorials in this volume).¹ He might criticize a figure of the past, making it perfectly clear that there was a parallel with a figure of the present; he might commiserate with the emperor about the flawed advice tendered by his officials; he could cite from approved texts or sayings of respected masters to support

his case, and in the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi it was becoming more usual to quote Kongzi (Confucius) himself. Or an official might seize the opportunity offered by a rare and destructive act of nature, in order to exploit it as an omen portending to the impending civil unrest or dynastic weakness. Should an official believe that, in good conscience, he could not serve the regime any longer, he could withdraw from his position or take up the life of a hermit.² If he felt the need to express his views, he could still do so in writing, in the form of a *fu* (sometimes called “rhapsody”), whose allegories and allusions would clearly reveal the object of his protest, at least to those in the know.³ Or, reduced to desperation, he might choose suicide. In light of such considerations, we should assess the contributions made by certain individuals to the foundation, continuation, and character of the empire.

Examples of criticism and protest are presented elsewhere.⁴ This chapter concerns four men of Qin and Western Han who contributed in an outstanding way to China’s dynastic empires, two of whom came to be almost universally reviled and two who have by no means always received adequate acknowledgment. The First Emperor of Qin (r. 221–210 BCE) created a model of imperial government and administrative organs to which later and more permanent dynasties owed much. Wang Mang (r. 9–23 CE) left to the imperial government an intellectual orientation bent on emulating the ideals of a glorious past. After their deaths, both men were excoriated, the first as a cruel tyrant and the second as a wily “usurper.” By contrast, Liu Xiang (79/78–8 BCE) and Liu Xin (46 BCE–23 CE), youngest of Liu Xiang’s three sons, usually receive praise for their contributions to the preservation of Chinese literature;⁵ they were chiefly responsible for collecting the great bulk of manuscripts that existed in their time, even if the greater part has now been lost. To Sima Tan’s (d. ca. 110 BCE) identification of six modes of thought, Liu Xiang and Liu Xin added a detailed classification of the received literature that became authoritative in molding Chinese thought and in training civil servants.

Neither the First Qin Emperor nor Wang Mang was exclusively responsible for the decisions or activities of his reign. The former drew on precedents from earlier regimes; Wang Mang called upon teachings being developed or promoted by others, such as Liu Xiang, Liu Xin, Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE), Jing Fang the Younger (77–37 BCE), and Huan Tan (ca. 43 BCE–28 CE), all of whom contributed much to the development of Chinese ways of thinking in Western Han.⁶ Today Yang Xiong is best known for applying the writings ascribed to Kongzi to the issues of his own time; Jing Fang, for his *Yi* (*Changes*) interpretations; and Huan Tan (quite anachronistically) as a forerunner of Han’s best-known rationalist, Wang Chong (27–97 CE). Liu Xiang and his son Liu Xin were each well aware of the curses that came with tyranny, and both men were exposed to some of the hazards mentioned above, insofar as Liu Xiang was distressed, even alarmed, by the power enjoyed by the Wang family, while Liu Xin must have had conflicting loyalties, since he at first supported but finally tried to overturn Wang Mang.

Liu Xiang (79/78–8 BCE)

Given their highly original frames of mind, neither Liu Xiang nor Liu Xin could avoid involvement in the controversies of their own times. Though both were members of the imperial family, their relationships to the reigning emperors were somewhat remote, with Liu Xiang (originally named Gengsheng) a fourth-generation descendant from Liu Jiao, brother of the Han founder. Born in 79 BCE, most probably, Liu Xiang lived through the dynastic crisis five years later, following the death of the young Zhaodi in 74 BCE, but he surely was too young to have felt its effect. Recommended for a junior post at the age of twelve (ca. 67 BCE), Xiang's entry into public life coincided with a dangerous time in dynastic affairs: Huo Guang, who had exercised a predominant influence on the decisions of government for some decades, died in 68 BCE; his entire family was then brought to ruin in 66 BCE; and Xuandi started to take a personal hand in the government of the empire.

Soon after this, Liu Xiang found himself in trouble, thanks to the interest he had taken in alchemical attempts to prolong life and manufacture gold.⁷ Charged with making false claims about his success in making gold, he escaped the death penalty by means of ransom. We find him then taking part in the discussions of 51 BCE as a proponent of the *Guliang zhuan* (*Guliang Traditions*). Once appointed to an official post at a low grade, he enjoyed the support of some officials, even as he earned the animosity of two prominent eunuchs.

Early in Yuandi's reign (perhaps 48 or 47 BCE), Liu Xiang was recommended for appointment by Xiao Wangzhi and Zhou Kan, two court officials whose views had been informed by formal training in the classics, specifically the *Documents* (*Shangshu*), the *Odes* (*Shi*), and the *Rites* classics (*Li*). Opposed to Xiao and Zhou were Empress Xu, Xuandi's queen, and the members of the consort family named Li,⁸ along with two favored eunuchs, Hong Gong and Shi Xian. As Commissioner of the Imperial Clan (*Zongzheng*) appointed with the backing of Xiao and Zhou, Liu Xiang soon became embroiled in the court rivalry between the two groups. Therefore, in the first of his memorials addressed to the emperor, Liu Xiang set out to restore Xiao Wangzhi's reputation by arguing from past mistakes, as when men such as Ji Bu, Ni Kuan, and Dong Zhongshu had been dismissed or demoted but later recalled for service, when their true merits had been belatedly recognized.⁹ Such advice failed to save Xiao Wangzhi, however, and he was forced to commit suicide. Liu Xiang himself was reduced to commoner status.

In his next memorial (perhaps in 46 BCE),¹⁰ Liu Xiang again relied on historical examples to criticize the current situation, contrasting the beneficent examples of Shun, King Wen of Zhou, and the Zhougong (Duke of Zhou) against the disastrous Kings You and Li. He reminded the emperor about the calamities—cosmic and human—that occurred in the benighted era described in the *Annals* (*Chunqiu*), mentioning for good measure the *Odes* and *Changes* passages devoted to Heaven's blessings or ideal government. In the current situation, Liu Xiang complained, the powerful factions

could easily entrap honest men, given the emperor's weakness, his suspicious nature, his indecisiveness, his failure to appoint the right sort of officials, and his preference for flatterers. Liu Xiang pointed out that good order could not exist unless evildoers were punished, which Kongzi's own example clearly demonstrated.¹¹

The accession of Chengdi in 33 BCE and the fall of Yuandi's two palace eunuchs brought Liu Xiang an opportunity to return to public life,¹² and perhaps to signify his new lease on life, he changed his given name to Xiang.¹³ In any case, by 33 BCE, Liu Xiang's full attention was focused on the excessive power that the Wang family was enjoying. Natural catastrophes offered him an opening to state his objections. Chengdi's response was to order him to "superintend the collation (*jiao*) and centralization (*zhong*) of the Five Classics and reserve [i.e., secret] writings (*mishu*)," with the result that Liu Xiang undertook the bibliographical work for which he is chiefly famous. Precise orders followed in 26 BCE.¹⁴

We will never know whether Chengdi was hoping by this means to divert Liu Xiang from criticizing the Wang family. However, among the palace holdings Liu Xiang found manuscripts entitled *Shangshu Hongfan* (*The Documents' Great Plan*)¹⁵ and *Jizi wei Wu wang chen wuxing yin yang xiu jiu zhi ying* (*Master Ji's Exposition to King Wu regarding the Beneficial or Detrimental Effects of the Five Phases and Yin-Yang*).¹⁶ Possibly the latter drew Liu Xiang's attention to the Five Phases concept in relation to anomalies and catastrophes. Liu eventually compiled a work in eleven chapters (*pian*) entitled *Hongfan wuxing zhuan lun* (*On the Great Plan's Wuxing Traditions*) (possibly the basis of Liu's comments on portents as recorded in the *Hanshu*'s "Treatise on the *Wuxing*").¹⁷ Fully aware that Liu Xiang's motive lay in criticizing members of the Wang family, Chengdi was nonetheless unable to curtail their power.

In Liu Xiang's next expression of views, dated to 16 BCE, he called on the same type of argument and citation to protest the building project at a site east of Chang'an, named Changling, which was intended to replace the tomb complex whose construction had started immediately after Chengdi's accession at Yanling, west of the capital city.¹⁸ The project at Changling had been started in 20 BCE, but by 16 BCE it was still not finished, and both the delay and the expense were arousing protest.¹⁹ Liu Xiang started by citing the *Xici zhuan* (*Appended Phrases*) section of the *Changes* classic and Kongzi's explanation of a passage in the *Odes*.²⁰ Dynasties are anything but permanent, Liu reminded Chengdi, referring to the Three Dispensations (*San Tong*) and also to the Mandate of Heaven's principle that no charge remains forever with the same ruling family, regardless of their behavior.²¹ He then launched into his account of historical precedents. Wendi's tomb had been of the simplest, as had been those of other sage-rulers, including Yao; frugality in burial was the principle adopted by Kongzi for his own mother. The First Emperor of Qin's burial had been wildly extravagant, only to have his tomb destroyed soon afterward and his burial mound become the preserve of sheep and goats—a sign that rich burials, far from ensuring a dynasty's continuance, could bring about all manner of evils, including the downfall of the dynasty, desecration of

tombs, and vagrancy. Liu Xiang even went so far as to say that he would be ashamed of an emperor who sought to emulate the extravagance of oppressive Qin. In 16 BCE the Changling project was abandoned.

In his other writings, Liu Xiang called on arguments of much the same type to strengthen his case. Shocked by the prominent place and poor manners of the low-class women in the palace, such as the Empress Zhao and her sister, he cited the cases of women of exemplary conduct in the past, contrasting such model figures with others who led a monarch and his realm to ruin. He wrote up these lessons by way of warning in an eight-chapter text entitled *Lienü zhuan* (*Biographies of Exemplary Women*).²² For good measure, Liu Xiang also drew on records and legends of the past to compose his *Xinxu* (*New Order*) and *Shuoyuan* (*Profusion of Persuasions*), for a total of up to fifty chapters.²³ Chengdi approved the content of these texts, but he was constantly sighing that he was unable to apply their lessons in their entirety.²⁴

Concern for the emperor's failure to produce an heir moved Liu Xiang to return to the theme in a sealed address to the throne sometime after 20 BCE, with the further motive of discrediting the families of some of the emperor's consorts.²⁵ Liu cited examples from the pre-imperial Chunqiu and Zhanguo times, in which overpowerful ministers of state seized control of a kingdom and committed regicide. The emperor should also consider two other cases: the First Emperor of Qin's misplaced trust in Zhao Gao²⁶ and the Lü family's seizure of power. Through these examples, Liu Xiang may have intended the emperor to recall the powers that the two eunuchs, Shi Xian and Hong Gong, had acquired in Yuandi's reign and the harm they had done to worthy men such as Liu. In a severe reprimand, Liu then came to the main point that he intended to deliver: the arbitrary way in which the family of the Empress Dowager Wang had been controlling senior appointments in favor of her own kin, to the detriment of the authority of the imperial house. Asserting that the Wang family was by far the most powerful of the distaff families ever known in all of history, Liu urged Chengdi to take steps to expel all potentially dangerous and disruptive persons from office, if he did not wish to bring the Liu ruling house to ruin.

In 10 BCE, news of the collapse of Mount Min in Shu (Sichuan) reached Chang'an; the landslide had blocked the river, forcing its flow to reverse direction.²⁷ Citing a comparable occurrence in Zhou times, Liu Xiang gravely predicted the end of the Han dynasty. Surprisingly, he was not punished for this prediction, which might well have brought a capital charge of treason. The compiler of the *Hanshu* added that three generations later (i.e., after the reigns of Chengdi, Aidi, and Pingdi), Wang Mang "usurped" the throne.

Liu Xiang is described as being easygoing by temperament. Deeply concerned for the dynastic fortunes, he seems to have harbored no particular ambitions for personal advancement, preferring to concentrate on scholarly matters and observation of the heavenly bodies.²⁸ Perplexed and perhaps alarmed by strange and unexplained phenomena, whether during pre-imperial times or during Chengdi's reign, his explana-

tions sometimes tallied with those of Dong Zhongshu, for whom he had a deep (and at the time perhaps exceptional) admiration.²⁹ The themes that we have encountered already recur in Liu's comments in the "Treatise on the *Wuxing*," together with explanations that read some events as warnings sent by Heaven. As we read elsewhere, Chengdi felt himself incapable of taking any action on the basis of Liu Xiang's advice.³⁰

Liu Xiang took part in the discussions of 51 BCE as a proponent of the *Guliyang Traditions*.³¹ He supposedly recognized the unique value of Jing Fang's interpretations of the *Changes*;³² and he coordinated six calendars, sorting out their errors and compiling a text entitled *Wu ji lun* (*On the Five Cycles*), which does not survive.³³ Together with Liu Xin, he apparently explained dynastic transfers in terms of the Five Phases, with Han existing under the patronage of Fire.³⁴ The bibliographical list that he and his son compiled includes the entry *Liu Xiang suo xu* (*Compilations by Liu Xiang*), in sixty-seven chapters (*pian*), under the classicists' (*ru*) section.³⁵

Regarding religious matters, Liu Xiang forcefully argued in favor of retaining the old rites to the Five Lords (Wu Di) rather than replacing them with those addressed to Heaven and Earth.³⁶ He successfully prevented charges being leveled against Gan Yan-shou and Chen Tang for taking unauthorized action against the Xiongnu leader Zhizhi in 36 BCE.³⁷ It was also Liu Xiang who accused Gan Zhongke of falsely invoking occult powers, thereby misleading the people.³⁸

Liu Xin (46 BCE–23 CE)

Liu Xin, born in 46 BCE, was the third son of Liu Xiang.³⁹ By an early age he had gained a familiarity with texts such as the *Odes* and the *Documents* classics and had mastered the skills of good writing. While lengthy texts of Liu Xiang survive independently, few writings of Liu Xin survive aside from a few *fu*⁴⁰ and some longer pieces he composed that have been incorporated into the *Hanshu*. These latter works are the *Shijing* (*Passage of the Generations*), his account of mythological history and pre-imperial history;⁴¹ the summary of the catalogue of items held in the imperial libraries; and a long and controversial letter addressed to the Commissioner for Ceremonial (Taichang), as supervisor responsible for the Academicians, compiled sometime between 6 and 3 BCE.⁴²

From his youth onward, Liu Xin held an official appointment of some sort.⁴³ Still, the record does not show him playing any part in the major decisions made by Han imperial government. Under attack for his literary and scholarly work, following his rebuke of the Academicians, he deliberately sought an appointment outside Chang'an as a commandery Governor.⁴⁴ With the archaizing title of Xihe, he implemented the orders of the Grand Empress Dowager, as is seen in the "Monthly Ordinances" inscription at Xuanquan, near Dunhuang.⁴⁵ His support for Wang Mang is shown in several ways. He arranged for the marriage of the Wangs' daughter to Pingdi, and he submitted a flattering memorial to Wang Mang on the death of his mother in 8 CE.⁴⁶ He married his own daughter, Liu Yin, to one of Wang Mang's sons. Shortly after Wang Mang's

accession, Liu Xin accepted nomination to the highly honored position of the Nation's Tutor (Guo Shi), with the noble title of Lord Who Celebrates the Xin Dynasty (Jia Xin Gong).⁴⁷ In 10 CE he advised Wang Mang on economic matters.⁴⁸ But by 23 CE, if not before, Liu Xin had become deeply disillusioned with Wang Mang, so he joined a conspiracy to eliminate him and restore the house of Liu. When the plot was exposed, Liu Xin took his own life.⁴⁹

The thorny question of the retention or abandonment of some of the shrines dedicated to the deceased emperors had been raised by Gong Yu in 44 BCE and was the subject of heated discussion in 40, 38, 36, and 28 BCE. It arose yet again in 7 BCE, when fifty-three officials proposed a reduction of these to no more than five, which meant excluding the shrine dedicated to Wudi.⁵⁰ The suggestion met with bitter opposition on the part of Liu Xin, at that time Colonel of the Central Ramparts (Zhonglei Xiaowei), and Wang Shun, a relative of Wang Mang, then Commissioner for Transport (Taipu).⁵¹ Liu Xin and Wang Shun argued that Wudi's achievements were outstanding: he had taken a firm stand against the Xiongnu, he had enriched the population, and he had ensured the survival of descendants of the pre-imperial Zhou ruling house;⁵² such actions entitled Wudi to the special title of Era Leader (Shi Zong), which brought with it maintenance of his shrine and sacrifices in perpetuity. Liu Xin and Wang Shun drew attention to the prescriptions of the "True King's Regulations" chapter of the *Liji* (Rites Record)⁵³ and to those in the *Guliang* tradition,⁵⁴ which together provided for seven memorial shrines to be maintained for the emperor and his ancestors, thereby distinguishing his line from the princes and nobles, who were entitled at most to no more than five shrines.⁵⁵ Perhaps the first memorialists to cite the *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo Traditions*)⁵⁶ to support their arguments, Liu and Wang stressed the importance of patrilineal descent, but they noted the absence of a clear and trustworthy statement in the classics or commentarial traditions (*jing zhuan*) regarding the order of precedence or number of ancestors to be served. The court's acceptance of their views perhaps helped to establish Wudi's reputation as one of China's most celebrated emperors.⁵⁷

Liu Xin was one of sixty-seven officials (with at least one, Ping Yan, specifically named as an associate of Wang Mang) to support Wang Mang's call for siting the imperial altars to Heaven and Earth at Chang'an (5 BCE).⁵⁸ Here his view opposed that of his father, who had argued for the retention of the old sacrifices to the Five Powers.

On at least forty-three occasions, the *Hanshu's* "Treatise on the *Wuxing*" records explanations of abnormal and catastrophic events given by Liu Xiang and Liu Xin. There are notable differences between the readings generated by father and son. Those of Liu Xiang were sometimes coupled with those of Dong Zhongshu, whereas those of Liu Xin were not. Liu Xiang called upon Heaven's warnings, whereas Liu Xin did not. Liu Xiang cited examples from the *Guliang Traditions*, whereas Liu Xin cited the *Zuo Traditions*, although neither of them did so very frequently, judging from the extant sources. On at least one occasion Liu Xiang took the opportunity to criticize a contemporary situation and, by implication, the monarch, whereas Liu Xin did not.⁵⁹ Liu

Xiang tended to restrict himself to naming factual events, whereas Liu Xin deliberately raised moral issues. The two men, father and son, moreover explained solar eclipses in markedly different ways: Liu Xiang (with Dong Zhongshu) launched into historical disquisitions, reading Heaven's warnings into events, whereas Liu Xin, a calendrical expert, commented briefly, in astronomical terms.⁶⁰ Liu Xiang called on popular beliefs, Liu Xin on factual explanation.⁶¹

The *Hanshu's* "Treatise on the Pitch Pipes and Calendar,"⁶² compiled mainly by Liu Xin, includes a section entitled *Passage of the Generations*, whose treatment of dynastic history suggests that it may have been compiled to support Wang Mang.⁶³ Starting with a long citation from the *Zuo Traditions*,⁶⁴ it sets out ten legendary sovereigns, starting with Tai Haodi (a.k.a. Bao Xi or Fu Xi) and ending with Tang, founder of the Shang ruling house.⁶⁵ The briefest of notes concern genealogical matters and each sovereign's purported achievements, after which the text specifies the ruling phase ascribed to each reign, according to the Production Order.⁶⁶ For three of the sovereigns (Tai Haodi, Yandi, and Huangdi), the *Passage* cites from the *Appended Phrases*;⁶⁷ for Tai Hao and three others (Shao Hao, Zhuan Xu, and Di Ku), it notes that the *Appended Phrases* does not mention the sovereign in question, so it gives other sources.⁶⁸

The *Passage* also attempts to resolve scholarly disputes. For example, in its entry for Tai Hao, the *Passage* cites the "Ji dian" ("Norms for Sacrifice"),⁶⁹ explaining that Gong Gong was not included in the list of sovereigns, as he did not receive an assigned phase, since he held a title other than that of social rank (*bo*, sometimes rendered "count" or "baron"). The *Passage* continues: "Qin held its power by means of Water, intermediately between Zhou with Wood, and Han with Fire."⁷⁰ These lines from the *Passage* could validate Wang Mang's adoption of Earth, assuming the sequence Zhou-Wood, Han-Fire, Xin-Earth, so long as Qin was entirely omitted; Wang Mang's assumption of the patron Earth phase is also asserted in the document entitled *Fuming* (*Tally Mandate*) promulgated immediately after the foundation of the Xin dynasty in 9 CE.⁷¹ The same scheme would then allow the claim that Han rulers were descended from Yao (Fire) and Wang Mang from Shun (Earth). Thus, just as Yao had abdicated to make way for Shun, so had Han abdicated in favor of Xin. In his *Tally Mandate*, Wang Mang named several legendary rulers (Huangdi, Shao Hao, Zhuan Xu, and Di Ku) and Yao, Shun, and Yu as his ancestral rulers, and the sage-ministers Gao Yao and Yi Yin (whom Liu Xin did not mention). In all likelihood, Wang Mang owed a debt to Liu Xin for drawing up and "verifying" this list of luminaries.⁷²

Father and Son: Influence and Legacy

Perhaps the main achievement and most long-lasting contribution of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin to China's cultural heritage lay in their work as scholars and bibliographers. Even a century before the Lius, in Wudi's reign some men of letters had realized how many of the pre-Qin manuscripts had been lost in Qin and early Western Han; and the

Gongyang expert Gongsun Hong, while Chancellor (124–121 BCE), had been ordered to collect any surviving writings. These were then kept in several depositories, and the number of manuscripts had grown appreciably over the hundred intervening years between Wudi and Chengdi.⁷³ After the initial steps were taken in Chengdi's reign, Liu Xiang's organization of the palace's collections began in earnest in 26 BCE.⁷⁴ Liu Xiang was to collate texts of the classics and their commentarial traditions (*jing zhuan*), masterworks, poems, and *fu*; Chen Nong, the lost literature throughout the empire. Ren Hong, Yin Xian, and Li Zhuguo would work on military texts, technical texts (*shu shu*), and the medical texts, respectively.⁷⁵ Liu Xiang took it upon himself to sort out the contents and purpose of each bibliographic item, before recording it in a catalogue that he intended to present to the throne. When Liu Xiang died, Aidi ordered his son Liu Xin to complete his father's work.

That work included comparing two or more surviving copies of a text and drawing up an approved version or recension. In the notes appended to his catalogue, later collected together under the title of *Bielu* (*Separate Record*), Liu Xiang composed notices for each manuscript that described the history of the component texts and the circumstances of their discovery, but no more than a few such notices survive today.⁷⁶ After his father's death, Liu Xin continued to sort out the whole collection (probably for a year or so), after which he presented his catalogue under the revised title of *Qilüe* (*Seven Summaries*), probably in 6 BCE. The compilers of the *Hanshu* extracted that catalogue's main points and used them as the basis for the *Hanshu*'s thirtieth chapter.⁷⁷

In *Hanshu* chapter 30, the surviving summary of the works by Liu Xiang and Liu Xin presents the titles of the works that they found and arranged under particular categories. Whether Liu Xin's *Seven Summaries* was primarily devised to classify genres of Chinese literature and modes of Chinese thought, or more simply as a guide for librarians to show them how to shelve their collections, is a question of considerable importance. Perhaps that Liu Xin arranged to move some of the manuscripts from one depository to another suggests that the *Seven Summaries* was intended for practical purposes, rather than exclusively as an exercise in creating genres of literature.⁷⁸

Certainly Chen Nong and his colleagues did not succeed in collecting copies of all the manuscripts that existed in pre-imperial or imperial times; the omission of the two texts mentioned by Gan Zhongke is a case in point.⁷⁹ Perhaps Liu Xiang and his colleagues could not always locate copies on silk and bamboo, as some of the texts of that type were known only orally and had not been committed to writing; perhaps they were indeed duly presented and then deliberately excluded as being potentially subversive. Chapter 30 of the *Hanshu* lists a total of 677 works, of which no more than 153 (27 percent) survive in some form today.⁸⁰

Unlike his father, Liu Xin was an advocate for the *Zuo*, a text that Xin had come across in the course of his bibliographical work and which he hoped to have included among the works approved for state-sponsored study and training. Equally significantly, in a letter to the Academicians (see this chapter's appendix) under the Com-

missioner for Ceremonial,⁸¹ Liu Xin formulated what would soon become the standard account of China's long textual history. The letter spoke of Kongzi's major contributions and of the losses incurred during the wars of unification and under Qin, also of the attempts to restore the textual legacy during the early days of Western Han. It singled out for mention Shusun Tong (fl. 195 BCE), Chao Cuo (executed 154 BCE), and Jia Yi (201–169 BCE), with Jia identified as “the one and only true specialist” in traditional writings to serve the early Western Han court. It characterized Wudi's reign as a time of increased attention to textual traditions, and it specifically cited the claim that a corpus of ancient writings in Archaic Script had been discovered during the demolition of Kongzi's residence, including, Liu Xin said, Zuo Qiuming's version of the *Annals*;⁸² curiously, however, it was only in Chengdi's time that this corpus became available to scholars for study. In an outspoken criticism of the scholars of the time, Liu Xin's letter excoriated them for being narrow-minded, oblivious to much of the evidence at hand, and deaf to new ideas. He further charged them with being so unacquainted with the past that they were unable to advise on certain activities, such as the construction of the Circular Moat or the conduct of the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies. They even, he scoffed, had the audacity to say that Mr. Zuo was no transmitter of the *Annals* classic. Smugly complacent with their own standards of scholarship, they refused to take account of anything that lay outside their ken. The only thing to do was to dismiss them from their posts.

We cannot judge how far Liu Xin was justified in his strictures,⁸³ though we may admire his determination to shake free of the prevailing prejudices and his insistence on the importance of new evidence. We can see how he would have infuriated his seniors, whether sitting complacently on their chairs of learning or enjoying their high offices. The Imperial Counsellor (Da Sikong) Shi Dan, for one,⁸⁴ wrote of how, “by his changes, he was throwing old sections of writings into confusion” (*gai luan jiu zhang*) and denigrating the achievements of previous emperors (charges that would leave Liu Xin liable for treason).⁸⁵ Gauging the temper of the court, Liu Xin saw fit to remove himself from Chang'an in a self-imposed exile.

We may look more closely at the circumstances in which Liu Xin chose to promote the *Zuo Traditions*.⁸⁶ After his discovery of the text in a palace library, Liu Xin proceeded to edit it in company with Yin Xian, one of Liu Xiang's collaborators, and to expound it together with Yin and Zhai Fangjin, the Chancellor.⁸⁷ The manuscript version Liu used included a number of old characters and expressions that other scholars were bypassing and that Liu Xin attempted to explain and gloss. He insisted first that Zuo's values were identical with those expressed by Kongzi, and second, that Zuo had known Kongzi personally, whereas Gongyang Gao and Guliang Chi had lived centuries after the time of Kongzi and his seventy disciples; personal acquaintance was always more valuable than mere hearsay.

The extant records often tell us that Liu Xin failed to dissuade his father from adhering to the *Guliang* interpretive traditions. But, curiously enough, a single fragment said

to derive from Huan Tan's (ca. 43 BCE–28 CE) writings says,⁸⁸ “Liu Zizheng [i.e., Liu Xiang], Liu Zijun [i.e., Liu Xin] and the latter's cousin Liu Boyu⁸⁹—all men of distinction—valued the text ascribed to Zuo Qiuming highly, so highly that they taught their children and grandchildren the text, with the result that all their wives and daughters read and recited it.”⁹⁰ What we are to make of this passage remains a puzzle. What we do know is that the value of the *Zuo Traditions* came under question on two occasions: first, at a meeting held at the Yuntai, in the imperial palace, in Eastern Han (28 CE), which ended in an Academician's post being assigned the *Zuo* for a brief period of time;⁹¹ and second, in 76 CE, when Jia Kui⁹² (30–101 CE) argued that the *Zuo Traditions* was superior to the two other commentaries, as it best furthered the imperial agenda and tallied with the prophetic writings and esoteric diagrams (*chen tu*), proving the descent of the Liu ruling house from Yao and Red.⁹³ That the *Zuo Traditions* came to be regarded as the most authoritative reading of the *Annals* classic owes something to the work of Liu Xin (and possibly Liu Xiang). In addition, we may ponder whether it was thanks partly to the influence of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin that the theory of the Five Phases entered public life, by way of medical and divination texts. In addition China owed much to Liu Xin for his introduction in 8 or 7 BCE of the Triple Concordance calendar, whose significance has been studied elsewhere.⁹⁴

Conclusion

Ban Gu, noting how many diverse points of view were put forward in Han times, concluded, “When I look at the ideas of the many classicists and examine them closely, Liu Xin stands out as a man who combined wide learning with integrity.”⁹⁵ In the appraisal appended to the joint biography of Liu Xiang and Liu Xin,⁹⁶ Ban Gu grouped Liu Xiang with such towering figures as Mencius, Xunzi, Dong Zhongshu, Sima Qian, and Yang Xiong, all said to be men of wide-ranging learning, well-versed in things old and new, whose sayings were of immense benefit in their own eras. Special praise went to Liu Xiang's discussion of the *Hongfan* chapter of the *Documents* (*Hongfan lun*), the *Seven Summaries*, and the Triple Concordance calendar by Liu Xin.

In another passage already seen,⁹⁷ Ban Gu wrote of Liu Xiang's easygoing character and absence of overbearing pride. He was a man of integrity who delighted in the Way; he had few contacts with the common world, preferring to concentrate on his study of the classics and the arts transmitted from the sages. He spent his days at his books and his nights observing the stars, sometimes forgoing sleep until dawn. But dare we opine that Liu Xiang died no less unhappily than Liu Xin? Both men were deeply concerned with the welfare of the dynasty, and both saw reason to fear for its survival. Liu Xiang would seem to have striven to ensure the continuance of the Han ruling house by boldly setting out its faults and plans to rescue it. In Liu Xiang's time, in Chengdi's reign, there was as yet no open threat from another house to replace the ruling Liu clan, despite strong warnings by men such as Gan Zhongke, who thought the Han needed

its Mandate to be rededicated. As against the strong reprimands seen in Liu Xiang's memorials, we have no direct statements by Liu Xin that criticize any Han emperor. He lived through the reigns of the young and impressionable Aidi and the child Pingdi and witnessed the growing power of the Wang family.

May we ask whether, having given up in despair any hope that Han rule could be restored to a high standard, Liu Xin came to see leadership by Wang Mang as the sole way forward for the empire at large? The *Hanshu* gives us no hint of the pangs of conscience that he might have suffered, first at his disloyalty to the imperial house of which he was a member, and finally during his attempts to dislodge Wang Mang from power—a ruler with whom he had so many long-standing ties. How far his feelings are revealed in his one remaining *fu* may well be seen in David Knechtges's chapter in this volume.

Appendix: Liu Xin's Letter Regarding the Academicians (a Translation)

INTRODUCTION TO THE LETTER

The biography of Liu Xin states that that he came into favor, thanks to the recommendation of Wang Mang, early in Aidi's reign.⁹⁸ Delighted with the *Chunqiu Zuo shi zhuan* (*Mr. Zuo's Tradition of the Annals*) in Archaic Script, found in the course of editing the works in the palace depository of reserved writings,⁹⁹ Liu Xin set himself the task of trying to explain its meaning, so that the reasoning behind each clause would become plain. How far his text corresponded with our received version, given the rearrangement by Du Yu (222–284 CE), is a matter for doubt. Liu Xin hoped to see his Archaic Script version, along with three other Archaic Script manuscripts—the Mao version of the *Odes*, the *Yili* (*Missing Rituals*), and a version of the *Documents* classic in Archaic Script—accorded a place in the official establishments of learning, with Academicians to supervise study and teaching. Aidi (r. 7–1 BCE) ordered him to argue the case for doing so, with the Academicians as experts in the Five Classics. It was to counter their opposition and by way of reproof that Liu Xin wrote them the following letter, care of the Commissioner for Ceremonial.

In the following, the numbers in brackets refer to page numbers in the punctuated Zhonghua shuju edition, while those expressed as number plus *a* or *b* are from the *Hanshu buzhu*.

THE LETTER

[1968; 32a] It was long ago, after the deaths of Yao and Shun,¹⁰⁰ that the glorious ages of the Three Dynasties followed each other in turn, with their illustrious sovereigns and blessed kings rising up, one after the other. They passed their heritage from one to the next, and their ideal way of life was abundantly clear. But once the house of Zhou had

fallen into decline, its rites and music were in no way true to [that legacy] and it became very difficult to practice that way of life in its entirety. Kongzi, in deep distress that it had passed out of use, responded to calls to go from one state to another, but it was only when he returned from Wei to Lu that the musical forms were set right, and the “Elegantiae” (“Ya”) and “Hymns” (“Song”) odes received the treatment that was their due. He edited the *Changes*, put the *Documents* in order, and compiled the *Annals* classic, so as to make a record of the ways chosen by the sovereigns and kings of old.¹⁰¹

When the Master died, those subtle ideas of his died with him. And when his seventy pupils were all gone, there was a marked turn away from the great principles that he had had of what was right. In addition, there befell the days of the warring kingdoms. The rituals with their fine vessels of wood or bamboo were abandoned; all attention was fixed on arraying troops for battle. Kongzi’s way of life was suppressed, and it was the arts of the Sunzi and Wu Qi that flourished.¹⁰² The decline continued, right up to the time of the oppressive rule by Qin, when the dynasty burnt the texts that had been held in such high honor, and put to death the specialists in traditional learning who were familiar with the old cultured way of life.¹⁰³ Laws were established that forbade private ownership of a book, and it was nothing less than a crime to praise the old way of life at the expense of the present. That is how it came about that those old ways perished, together with their methods.

It was long, long after the time of the illustrious sovereigns and blessed kings that the Han arose, by which time all links with Kongzi’s ways had been cut, and there were no precedents on which to call to build the institutions of the empire.¹⁰⁴ At the time there existed only one man, Shusun Tong (fl. 195 BCE), who set about fixing codes of conduct, and in the whole realm there was virtually nothing in writing other than the *Changes* and some texts on divination by turtle shells.¹⁰⁵ It was in Huidi’s reign (195–188 BCE) that the law banning private ownership of books was rescinded, but the people at court or in office, such as Zhou Bo and Guan Ying, [32b] were all of them armed warriors. None of them took any interest in this sort of thing.

A start was made in Wendi’s reign (180–157 BCE) when Chao Cuo¹⁰⁶ was sent to receive instruction in the *Documents* classic from Fu Sheng. This text, partly defective and partly in disarray, had first come to light when it was found in the walls of a house. It survives until this day, and all that the teachers of our time [1969] do is to transmit it by “reciting it out loud.”¹⁰⁷ The first signs appeared that a study of the *Odes* was starting. Written works were making their appearance everywhere, all of them sayings of the masters, or explanations of other writings, and Academicians’ posts were being set up even for them. However, there was only one specialist in traditional learning who had a place at court, and that was Mr. Jia.¹⁰⁸

It was not until the time of Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE) that there were found a number of teachers of an earlier style of learning for the *Odes*, the texts on ritual, and the *Annals* that came from Zou, Lu, Liang and Zhao.¹⁰⁹ These had all arisen during the Jianyuan reign period (140–135 BCE). It was a time when no one person was capable of mastering

the whole of a classical text on which he was concentrating. A man might have been concerned, say, with the “Elegantiae” or the “Hymns” [sections of the *Odes*], but work on the whole text of any one of the classical texts depended on [33a] collaboration.¹¹⁰ Later, when the “Great Oath” (“Tai shi”) [chapter of the *Documents* classic] came to light, the Academicians read it in a group, all together. This is why the Emperor’s decree ran, “The rules of conduct have been broken, and the musical forms have passed away. Texts are defective, with some of the strips on which they were transcribed [now] missing. We can only express Our deepest regret at this state of affairs.”¹¹¹ This was some seventy or eighty years after our Han dynasty had been founded, long, long after the time when a complete copy of these texts had been available.

The next development came when that King of Lu, styled the “Venerable,”¹¹² broke down [the walls of] Kongzi’s dwelling, so that he could build a palace. And there inside the broken-down walls they found texts transcribed in Archaic Script, thirty-nine chapters [*pian*] of the *Missing Rituals*,¹¹³ and sixteen of the *Documents*. After the Tian Han reign period (100–97 BCE), the family of Kong Anguo¹¹⁴ presented these writings to the throne. But right then there occurred that highly critical incident when rumors of witchcraft filled the court, and the texts were never put into circulation. [33b] In addition there was the *Annals* classic, as put in order by Zuo Qiuming. All of these were ancient texts in archaic style script, the largest of them in twenty or more *tong* [cases?].¹¹⁵ They were all stored in the depository for reserved books, hidden away and never brought to light.

Chengdi expressed his regret at the way in which classical learning had declined and the textual copies were defective, so that they were distinctly different from what they had been in their true state. So he had the reserved depositories opened [1970] and the old manuscripts turned over for collation, and it was then that these three items¹¹⁶ came to light. With these manuscripts in hand, we set about examining the received copies in the offices of learning. We found that some of the strips of writing were missing in the texts of the classics, and that some chapters of explanatory writings were out of order. So we instituted a public enquiry on a wide scale and discovered surviving traces of [the teachings] of a number of experts in classical learning, for example, those of Huan Gong in Lu, Guan Gong in Zhao, and Yong Sheng in Jiaodong.¹¹⁷ Just as with the three items already mentioned, these too had been suppressed and kept out of circulation.

This state of affairs was highly distressing for anyone capable of thought and it was a matter of deep concern to scholars and gentlemen (*shi junzi*). Hitherto those who had been collecting erudite citations¹¹⁸ [34a] never pondered the losses that literature had sustained, and whether these were due to deliberate suppression or to [inadvertant] breaks in transmission. They simply fastened on to questions of the narrowest importance and concentrated on insignificant detail. They split up their texts and explained the meaning of the characters with interminable verbiage. They were worn out and old, those men of learning, quite incapable of studying even one of the texts right through to its end! They believed what they were told by word of mouth, but they turned a blind

eye to written records. While accepting what their latter-day teachers said, they rejected anything that was really old. So, when a major event was to take place, such as the construction of the Circular Moat,¹¹⁹ or performance of the *feng* or *shan* imperial rites, or an imperial tour of inspection, they just looked blank. Not a one of them understood how these affairs were conducted originally.

All that they hoped to do was to protect something that was in effect spoilt and to preserve material that was defective. They were sticking to their personal ideas, which they feared they would see lying in ruins. They had no thought of adopting anything that would be better or of following what others took to be right. Maybe some of these persons were consumed with envy, never bothering to find out what the facts were. They banded together, their voices reverberating like thunder, simply accepting what they had heard, when giving their own opinions on what was right or wrong. They rejected study of the three recently found texts; they believed that the *Documents* in the form in which they had received it was complete and claimed that Mr. Zuo was no transmitter of the *Annals*. Can there be anything more distressing?

In contact as He is with spiritual powers, our illustrious Emperor today is devoted to maintaining the unity of His realm and expanding His heritage. He for His part laments the way in which literature and scholarship have gone astray and that the men of learning are of the type described. Although He clearly understands their situation, He has been content to take no decisive action, waiting for circumstances [to change] and yielding place to others, quite happy to make common cause with scholars and gentlemen. [34b] That is why His Majesty issued a decree¹²⁰ ordering an investigation into whether or not official provision should be made for Mr. Zuo's writings. He sent out his trusted ministers armed with a commission and orders to support the weak and prop up the feeble. They were to put their ideas together and cooperate with a few men of quality in the hope of finding some of the texts that had been discarded or gone missing.

But things are different nowadays [under Aidi]. The doors are firmly barred and there is no inclination to carry out any such an investigation. A work is excluded simply because nobody recites it. [1971] There are those hoping to bar the growth of other ways of thought, and close down the sort of scholarship that they regard as outmoded. Now, it is precisely the common lot who find it easy enough to enjoy something that has been completed, but very difficult to think about initiating anything.¹²¹ That is not what one expects from scholars and gentlemen.

There is one more point to mention. The activities of those many schools of old aroused the personal interest of the previous Emperor [Chengdi] and have been subject to examination by our present Emperor. The old manuscripts transcribed in Archaic Script are all supported by proven evidence, with a consistency between the copies that came out of the imperial reserve collection and those that have been brought in [for collation] from elsewhere. Surely this is anything but a trifling matter?!

“When the way to perform a ritual has been lost, you may find it out in the wilds.”

Are not old writings *better* than those found in the wilds?¹²² There was a time when the Academicians included Ouyang for the *Documents*, Gongyang Gao for the *Annals*, and Shi Chou and Meng Xi for the *Changes*.¹²³ Then Xuandi expanded the scope of this work by creating Academicians' posts for the *Gulian* explanations for the *Chunqiu*, for Liangqiu He's *Changes*, and for the *Documents*, according to Xiahou the Senior and Xiahou the Junior.¹²⁴ Notwithstanding the conflict of views among some of these thinkers, the posts were still set up, all together. Why so? Rather than make a mistake by abolishing something, surely it is better to err by starting something!

What do those tales that we have received say? "The ways of King Wen and King Wu have not dropped down to earth; they are to be found amongst mankind. People of intelligence set their minds on what is important, whereas those without it concentrate on minor matters."¹²⁵ The ways in which members of those many interpretive lines talk is to lump everything, great or small, together in one category. Surely it cannot be right to reject even one set of the [newly found] items that are of concern? Must these people stick to what they themselves think and simply cleave to what are no more than fragments of literature, banding together in their closely associated cliques, envious of the real truth of the matter? They disobey our Emperor's wise decree and lose sight of what those illustrious men of old had in mind. That may end with them falling into the hands of an official investigating criminal matters¹²⁶—hardly a course that any man of quality would choose.

Notes

- 1 For Gu Yong and others, see my chapter in this volume on Chengdi's reign.
- 2 For examples of four men who chose to leave the service of Qin and later refused the blandishments of Han Gaozu, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 483, on the Four Greybeards (Si Hao); for officials who refused to serve under Wang Mang, see *Hanshu* 72.3096; for hermits, see Vervoorn 1990.
- 3 See, for example, the *fu* of this kind written by Sima Xiangru.
- 4 See my chapters on Chengdi and the tombs built for him, in this volume.
- 5 See Karlgren 1931, esp. 1.
- 6 We have a few frustratingly short references to the relationships among these men of letters. Huan Tan argued about intellectual problems and anomalies in company with Liu Xin and Yang Xiong (*bian xi yi yi*); see *Hou Hanshu* 28A.955. Yang Xiong was appointed a Courtier (Lang) in company with Wang Mang and Liu Xin. Liu Xin was one of two men named as an admirer of Yang Xiong; Huan Tan took Yang Xiong to be quite unequalled in his character and erudition.
- 7 He had developed this interest by reading texts that his father, Liu De (7), had acquired during the course of a criminal investigation of a person from Huainan, presumably Liu An (King of Huainan, r. 164–122 BCE).
- 8 Presumably the family of Li Furen, the grandmother of Liu He (4).
- 9 *Hanshu* 36.1930. Liu Bang attempted to lay hands on Ji Bu to punish him, but later Liu Bang gave him a pardon and an appointment. After some questionable actions, Ni Kuan held the post of Imperial Counsellor from 110 to 103 BCE, longer than any other incumbent. After

- retiring from all appointments, Dong Zhongshu received high-ranking visitors from the central government, such as Zhang Tang, Commissioner of Trials (Tingwei), who had come to seek Dong's advice on policy matters.
- 10 *Hanshu* 36.1932.
- 11 Kongzi had not hesitated to have a malefactor put to death; he had been Sikou of Lu for only seven days when he ordered the execution of the miscreant Shao Zhengmao. See *Shiji* 47.1917; *Hanshu* 76.3228; and Liu Xiang, *Shuoyuan* 15/14b ("Zhi wu").
- 12 Liu Xiang was appointed Courtier of the Palace (Zhong Lang) and then Counsellor of the Palace (Guanglu Dafu), thereby acquiring wider scope for expressing his views.
- 13 For reasons and occasions for a change of name, see Loewe 2004, 19–22, 33–34.
- 14 *Hanshu* 10.310.
- 15 Perhaps the basis of Liu Xiang's omenological writings?
- 16 Some editions cite Guan Zhong as author here, but that must be wrong. Anachronisms are seen in the title, insofar as King Wu of Zhou, who is presumably the king named, lived centuries before Guan Zhong, and the *wuxing* could hardly have been an issue in his time.
- 17 Editors' note: As this chapter orders items by the "Hong fan" chapter of the *Documents*, in which the *wuxing* signifies "five resources" (and not Five Phases *qi*), this is probably the correct translation of the treatise title, rather than the usual rendering of "Treatise of the Five Phases." That the *wuxing* in the treatise seldom refers to the Five Phases is interesting in itself.
- 18 *Hanshu* 36.1950. For details of this project, see my chapter on Chengdi's two tombs in this volume.
- 19 For example, from Gu Yong; see *Hanshu* 85.3462.
- 20 *Xici zhuan* (2).12a; *Shijing* 16/11a ("Wen Wang").
- 21 For the San Tong (rendered Three Stages of Rulership and Three Dispensations by Loewe), see Loewe 2011, 296–302; for Tian Ming (Mandate of Heaven), see Loewe 2004, chap. 13.
- 22 *Hanshu* 36.1957.
- 23 The received text of the *Xinxu* runs to ten chapters (*juan*), but it may have consisted of thirty originally. There are twenty chapters in the *Shuoyuan*.
- 24 *Hanshu* 36.1958.
- 25 *Hanshu* 36.1958.
- 26 Zhao Gao is usually described as a eunuch; for reasons to doubt this, see Loewe 2005.
- 27 *Hanshu* 27B(1).1457.
- 28 *Hanshu* 36.1963. As a member of the Liu house, there are many high positions he would not have been allowed to hold, aside from that of Zongzheng Commissioner for the imperial clan).
- 29 *Hanshu* 56.2526.
- 30 *Hanshu* 36.1966.
- 31 *Hanshu* 88.3618.
- 32 *Hanshu* 88.3601. This is usually taken to refer to Jing Fang the Younger.
- 33 *Hanshu* 21A.979. The six calendars (*liu li*) are identified as *Da yan*, *Xuan ming*, *Ji yuan*, *Tong tian*, *Da ming*, and *Shou shi* (*Yuan shi* 52.1138), as compared with the Zhuan Xu calendar (*Hanshu* 21A.974; *Songshu* 12.228). For further references, see *Songshi* 74.1686, 82.1944. Identification of these as the calendars of Huangdi, Zhuan Xu, Xia, Yin, Zhou and Lu respectively (Morohashi 1957–60, 1453.601) is hardly consistent with information supplied in *Hanshu* 21A.974.
- 34 *Hanshu* 25B.1271.
- 35 *Hanshu* 30.1727. See the original note to this entry and the extensive comments in *Hanshu buzhu* 30.32b, which concern authorship of the "praises" and "illustrations" attached to some of Liu Xiang's writings. Fifty-two other works are given in that section.
- 36 See my chapter on Chengdi's reign in this volume.
- 37 *Hanshu* 70.3017; Loewe 1974, chap. 7.

- 38 See my chapter on Chengdi's reign in this volume.
- 39 See *Hanshu* 36.1967.
- 40 One such *fu* is explored in David Knechtges's chapter in this volume.
- 41 *Hanshu* 21B.1011; see this chapter's appendix.
- 42 *Hanshu* 21B.1011 (for the *Odes*); *Hanshu* 21A.979 (on the *Annals*); *Hanshu* 30; *Hanshu* 36.1968–71 (letter to the Taichang). *Hou Hanshu* 36.1237 dates the letter. Its text is also carried in the *Wenxuan*, chap. 43. For the translation of this letter, see this chapter's appendix. The letter was addressed to the Commissioner for Ceremonial to whom the Academicians were subordinated.
- 43 Starting as a Courtier of the Yellow Gates (Huangmen Lang), he became Colonel of the Central Ramparts (Zhonglei Xiaowei) in 8 BCE and Commandant of Cavalry (Fengju Duwei) during Aidì's reign. After his services in the provinces, he became Grand Counsellor of the Palace (Taizhong Dafu 3 CE), and received a nobility in 5 CE.
- 44 First as Governor of Henei, then Governor of Zhuojun and of one of the metropolitan areas (*Hanshu* 36.1972).
- 45 *Wenwu*, no. 5 (2000): 33–36. For this inscription, see also Sanft 2008.
- 46 *Hanshu* 97B.4009, 99A.4090.
- 47 *Hanshu* 99B.4100. The title of Guo Shi was established by Wang Mang and bestowed on Liu Xin in 9 CE (*Hanshu* 99B.4101; *Hou Hanshu* 13.513n). Han Li was the only other person to hold this title, circa 29 CE, that is, early in Eastern Han (*Hou Hanshu* 12.505).
- 48 *Hanshu* 24B.1179.
- 49 *Hanshu* 99C.4185. For the ennoblement of Liu Xin as Hongxiu Noble (Hongxiu Hou) and the statement that he was executed by Wang Mang, see *Hanshu* 18.716.
- 50 *Hanshu* 73.3125; Loewe 1994a, 294–96. See also Tian Tian's chapter in this volume.
- 51 See Bielenstein 1980. It is not known how far this post involved military duties. Other than Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, only one other holder is named for Western Han, Bing Gao, youngest son of Bing Ji (*Hanshu* 74.3148).
- 52 See Loewe 1994a, 326–35, for the ennoblement of a descendant named Jia as Zhou Zi Nan Jun.
- 53 *Liji zhushu* 12.10b, 13b.
- 54 These prescriptions are not traced.
- 55 For treatment of this subject, see *Liji zhushu* 12/13b.
- 56 *Zuozhuan*, Lord Zhuang, Year 9 (18/15b).
- 57 For criticism of Wudi, see Watson 1958, 33.
- 58 *Hanshu* 25B.1265. See the Yuanshi Ceremonies as discussed in Tian Tian's chapter.
- 59 *Hanshu* 27B(1).1445.
- 60 For example, *Hanshu* 27C(2).1492.
- 61 *Hanshu* 27B(1).1462, in explaining a portentous appearance of sandworms recorded for 676 BCE.
- 62 *Hanshu* 21; see Hulsewé, in Loewe 1993, 130. For a long passage of the chapter specifically identified as by Liu Xin, see *Hanshu* 21.979.
- 63 *Hanshu* 21B.1011. Presumably the *Passage of the Generations* text runs until the end of the chapter, which takes the tale right up to the year 56 CE, in the Jianwu reign period (*Hanshu* 21B.1024). Material that dates to a time after Liu Xin's death in 23 CE was presumably inserted by Ban Gu.
- 64 *Zuozhuan* Lord Zhao, Year 17 (48.4a–5a).
- 65 Tai Hao (Bao Xi), Yandi (Shen Nong), Huangdi (Xuan Yuan), Shao Hao, Zhuan Xu, Di Ku, Tangdi (Yao), Yudi (Shun), Bo Yu (Xia), Tang (Shang founder). The *Appended Phrases* relates the activities of the sovereigns it mentions to the sixty-four hexagrams but not the Five Phases.
- 66 For the various orders of the phases, see Nylan 2001, 369–71; Nylan 1993, 439–45, 626nn20–21.
- 67 *Xici zhuan* B/2 (8/4b–6a).

- 68 *Kao de* for Shao Hao; *Chunqiu wai zhuan* for Zhuan Xu; *Di xi* for Tangdi, Yudi, and Bo Yu. In its account, the extant *Appended Phrases* does mention Bao (or Fu) Xi (i.e., Tai Hao), Shennong (i.e., Yandi), and Huangdi (called Xuan Yuan) before passing immediately to Yao and Shun; it therefore omits Shao Hao, Zhuan Xu, and Di Ku. See n. 65 above. Editors' note: *Appended Phrases* does not assign one of the Five Phases to any rulers.
- 69 Identified by Yan Shigu (581–645 CE) with the "Ji fa" chapter of the *Liji*; see *Liji zhushu* 46/14b (chap. 23, "Ji fa").
- 70 Yan Shigu explains the following passage (*Hanshu* 21B.1012) as referring to Gong Gong; this may be an interpolation. Yan Shigu took the mention of Qin in Liu Xin's *Shijing* to refer to Qin as an interloper who had to be omitted from the sequence of rightful monarchs.
- 71 *Hanshu* 99B.4113; Loewe 2004, 515 (cf. p. 481).
- 72 *Hanshu* 99B.4105.
- 73 *Hanshu* 30.1701; *Hanshu buzhu* 30.1b, notes. A fragment of Liu Xin's *Qiliue*, as cited by Ru Chun (fl. 221–265 CE), names three depositories outside the palaces and three within.
- 74 *Hanshu* 10.310. For a full account of these measures, see van der Loon 1952, 357–93; Nylan 2011b.
- 75 Liu Xiang was Counsellor of the Palace (Guanglu Dafu); Ren Hong, Colonel of Infantry (Bubing Xiaowei); Yin Xian, Director of Astronomy (Taishi Ling); Li Zhuguo, Physician in Attendance (Shiyi).
- 76 For example, for *Guanzi* and *Zhanguoce*.
- 77 For the titles of the seven categories, see *Hanshu* 30.1701. Possibly the compilers were working from an earlier summary, but this is speculation. The *Qiliue* is not the same text as the *Bie lu* (now only in fragments), not to be confused with the *Qi lu* 七錄 a sixth-century bibliographical list compiled by Ruan Xiaoxu (479–536 CE).
- 78 The move was to be from the *Wenshi dian* to the *Tianlu ge*. See van der Loon 1952, 364.
- 79 These are the texts entitled *Tianguan li* and *Baoyuan taiping jing*. See n. 27 in my chapter on Chengdi's reign in this volume.
- 80 For these figures, see Bodde, in Twitchett and Loewe 1986, 71.
- 81 *Hanshu* 36.1967–71.
- 82 However, this allegation is only recorded in Liu Xin's letter. Other passages in the *Hanshu* do not include the *Zuozhuan* among the Archaic Script texts supposedly unearthed from the wall of this residence (editors' note).
- 83 Liu Xin's contemptuous charge that some of the most important scholars of his day failed to take proper note or even obtain a proper understanding of past traditions should be assessed in light of the contrary statements by supporters of the government in the *Yantie lun*. See *Yantie lun* 2.130 (chap. 10, "Ci fu") (speech of the Dafu), 5.332 (chap. 28, "Guo ji") (speech of the Chengxiang Shi), 9.555 (chap. 54, "Lun zi") (speech of the Counsellor or Dafu).
- 84 Or Grand Minister of Works; Shi Dan held this title for about a year in 7–6 BCE.
- 85 *Hanshu* 36.1972.
- 86 *Hanshu* 36.1967.
- 87 He held that post from 15 to 7 BCE. See *Hanshu* 84.3421.
- 88 *Yi lin* 3.9b (*Sibu beiyao*).
- 89 Identified by Timotheus Pokora as probably a son of Liu Xiang's son Liu Ji. See Pokora 1975, 103 and 87n34.
- 90 The text continues, "This was likewise a fault." Editors' note: Presumably, the fault was not that of allowing womenfolk to read, but of allowing them to study this particular text. No text prior to Ming (1368–1644 CE) suggests that women should not read.
- 91 *Hou Hanshu* 36.1228–33, 79B.2587; Anne Cheng 1985, 97–98. Han Xin suggested establishing an Academician's post dedicated to a specialist in the *Zuo*. Countering the sharp criticisms of

Fan Sheng, Chen Yuan defended this idea, repeating Liu Xin's argument that Zuo Qiuming was Kongzi's contemporary. The *Zuo* Academician post was indeed created, and its first occupant was Li Feng, but it was allowed to lapse within a year, as soon as Li died.

- 92 *Hou Hanshu* 36.1236–37; Anne Cheng 1985, 102–3, 105–7.
- 93 Editors' note: Zhangdi was already predisposed to favor any old texts, especially those in Archaic Script.
- 94 *Hanshu* 21A.979–80, 21B.1015–17; *Hou Hanshu* (treatise) 3.3082; Sivin 1969, 11.
- 95 *Hanshu* 73.3130.
- 96 *Hanshu* 36.1972.
- 97 *Hanshu* 36.1963.
- 98 *Hanshu* 36.1967; *Hanshu buzhu* 36.31a. The letter included here is also found in *Wenxuan* 43.1952–56.
- 99 *Mi zang* (palace repositories), which contained writings whose contents were not deemed suitable for general reading and were therefore not available for general use. Editors' note: Readers should note that no Han-era text, aside from this letter in the *Hanshu*, includes the *Zuo Traditions* in Archaic Script among the Lu wall texts (contrary to later traditions). See below.
- 100 The two sage-rulers are respectively called Tang and Yu here.
- 101 Note that three of the Five Classics are said to be edited by Kongzi (Confucius).
- 102 Two legendary strategists who reportedly compiled military classics. See *Hanshu* 30.1756–57, for entries on the *Wu Sunzi bing fa* and *Wu Qi*, in the list of writings generated by Liu Xiang and his son Liu Xin. Cf. Gawlikowski, “*Sun tzu ping fa*,” in *ECT*, 446–55; *Yinqueshan Han mu zhu jian*, vol. 1, transcriptions 3–44. For notes on the document from Yinqueshan, see Bai Yulan, in *Kaogu*, no. 12 (2010): 81.
- 103 Editors' note: Serious doubts have been raised about the historicity of these events, since the time of Gu Jiegang at the turn of the twentieth century, with Gu arguing that quite a different group was executed by the First Emperor. See Gu Jiegang 1935; Kern 2000; Nylan 2001, 2012.
- 104 Kongzi is here called by his sobriquet Zhong Ni.
- 105 Editors' Note: This statement is a gross exaggeration, and it is hard to credit Liu Xin's belief in it.
- 106 Recorder of Precedent (Zhanggu); Imperial Counsellor (Yushi Dafu) in 155 BCE, executed 154 BCE. See *Biographical Dictionary*, 27–29.
- 107 *Zhuan du*.
- 108 Jia Yi (200–168 BCE).
- 109 Lu, Liang, and Zhao were kingdoms of the Han empire. Zou, a county in Lu kingdom, is given as 鄒 in *Hanshu* 73.3101 and as 騶 in *Hanshu* 28B.1637; see *Hanshu buzhu* 28B(2).37a. The most distinguished person said to have come from Zou was Meng Ke (Mencius). Thanks to his extensive knowledge of the *Rites* and the *Documents*, and his teaching of the *Odes*, Wei Xian of Zou, Chancellor of the Han empire during the years 71–67 BCE, became known as “a great classicist (*da ru*) [of the *Odes*], from Zou and Lu” (*Hanshu* 73.3107).
- 110 See the note in *Hanshu buzhu* 36.33a.
- 111 This may refer to a decree of 124 BCE, which, however, does not mention the poor state of the writings (*Hanshu* 6.171, 30.1701).
- 112 That is, Liu Yu, King of Lu (r. 153–128 BCE).
- 113 *Yili*.
- 114 For the addition of *jia* 家, see *Hanshu buzhu* 36.33a–b, notes.
- 115 The meaning of *Ershi yu tong* 二十餘通, which elicits no explanation by traditional commentators, is unclear.
- 116 Editors' note: It is curious that the letter does not mention the *four* items in Archaic Script. Commentators assume the three here are the *Zuo shi*, the so-called *Missing Rituals*, and the

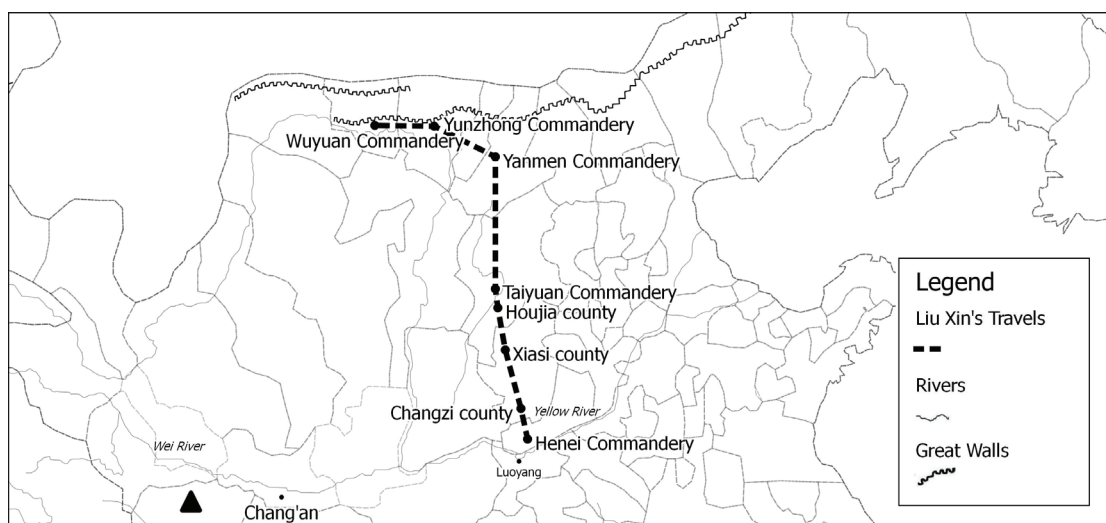
- Documents*, and not the *Mao Odes*, as mentioned in *Hanshu* 36.1967.
- 117 The reading of Bo 柏 is corrected to Huan. Huan Gong, also known as Huan Sheng, was a pupil of Xu Sheng of Lu, a specialist in the *Rituals*. Guan Gong is said to have received instruction in the *Zuozhuan* from Jia Yi (*Hanshu* 88.3620). Yong Sheng, instructed in the *Documents* by Duwei Chao, became an Academician for the *Guliang*. Both *gong* and *sheng* are respectful terms of address but whether they vary in meaning is unclear.
- 118 *Zhui xue zhi shi* refers to “those collecting textual citations” (often to compile a text from such passages); see *Da Dai Liji* (cited by Shen Qinhan, 1775–1832 CE) in *Hanshu buzhu* 36.34a, note.
- 119 In 5 CE Liu Xin and three others were ennobled for their part in putting the Devotional Hall (Ming Tang) and Biyong (Circular Moat) in order; *Hanshu* 12.359, 18.716.
- 120 This decree is not traced.
- 121 In his note to the text in the *Wenxuan*, Li Shan (ca. 630–689 CE) refers to the occurrence of this passage in a text named *Tai Gong jin kui* 太公金匱.
- 122 The cited passage is attributed to a saying of Zhongni in the comments that follow the entries for works of the masters (*zi*) in *Hanshu* 30.1746; it presumably derived from Liu Xin’s hand. Editors’ note: The term “wilds” usually refers to areas beyond the urban areas.
- 123 Editors’ note: On balance it seems more likely that this refers to Ouyang Sheng, who gave instruction in the *Documents* to Ni Kuan (fl. 110 BCE), rather than to Ouyang Gao or Ouyang Diyu. But the text here speaks only of an Ouyang or possibly several Ouyangs, without specifying whom.
- 124 For Liangqiu He, see *Hanshu* 88.3600. For Xiahou Sheng (senior) and Xiahou Jian (junior), see *Hanshu* 88.3604.
- 125 The citation is from *Analects* 19/6, where the saying is ascribed to Zigong. See translation in Legge 1865–95, vol. 1, 346; cf. translation in Lau 1979, 156.
- 126 For this interpretation of *wen li*, see Odake 1979, vol. 2, 77n8, 489.

A *Fu* by Liu Xin on His Travels in Shanxi and Inner Mongolia

David R. Knechtges 康達維

THE SUBJECT OF THIS CHAPTER IS A LONG *FU* POEM ATTRIBUTED TO THE late Western Han scholar Liu Xin (d. 23 CE),¹ youngest son of the famous scholar Liu Xiang (79/78–8 BCE), who was himself a fourth-generation descendant of a younger brother of the Han founder, Liu Bang. As a member of the imperial clan and son of an influential scholar-official, Liu Xin enjoyed an illustrious career at court during the reign of Chengdi (r. 33–7 BCE), beginning as Courtier of the Yellow Gates.² In about 26 BCE he joined his father, Liu Xiang, in editing texts and compiling the catalogue of the imperial library, the *Qilüe* (*Seven Summaries*). Also in 8 BCE, Liu Xin, continuing his work after his father's death in that year, was appointed Colonel of the Capital Ramparts. In the following year, thanks to the influence of his friend Wang Mang (43 BCE–23 CE), Liu Xin was appointed by Chengdi's successor, Aidi (r. 7–1 BCE), to the high positions of Palace Attendant and Grand Counsellor of the Palace, Commandant of Cavalry, and Palace Counsellor of the Imperial Carriages.

In 6 BCE Liu Xin changed his name to Liu Xiu (occasioning frequent confusion with the Eastern Han founder who bore the identical name). The emperor, most likely at Wang Mang's urging, put Liu Xin in charge of editing the Five Classics, a task that Liu Xin's father had not completed at the time of his death. In 6 BCE Liu Xin requested that the *Zuo Traditions* (*Zuozhuan*), the Mao version of the *Odes* (*Shi*), the remnants of the classical ritual texts, and the Archaic Script version of the *Documents* classic (*Shangshu*) be made official texts in the imperial university. When his proposal met with strong criticism from important officials, Liu Xin submitted a



MAP 15.01 The journey taken by Liu Xin during his exile. Map by Daniel Shultz.

letter to the Academicians for the classics, chiding them for their stubborn opposition (see Loewe's appendix to chapter 14).³ This impolitic letter so angered the senior scholar Shi Dan (d. 3 CE) that he asked the emperor to impeach Liu Xin for "altering old established patterns and destroying what had been established by former emperors." Fearing punishment, Liu Xin asked to be assigned to a provincial post. He first was given the position of Governor of Henei Commandery (present-day Henan), but because members of the imperial clan were forbidden "to govern the Three Rivers" (the commanderies of Henei, Henan, and Hedong), he was transferred to the northern commandery of Wuyuan (northwest of present-day Baotou, Inner Mongolia). This was exile, in effect (Map 15.01).

On his way to Wuyuan, Liu Xin composed a *fu* titled *Sui chu fu* (a challenging title to translate—see below). The earliest full text of the *Sui chu fu* is contained in the *Guwen yuan* (*Collection of Old Writings*), a late anthology most likely compiled during Song that appeared first in a nine-chapter (*juan*) edition and somewhat later in a twenty-one chapter edition. (For a discussion of the variant characters used in Liu Xin's *fu* in the two editions of the *Collection of Old Writings*, see this chapter's appendix).⁴ Tenable evidence that the *Sui chu fu* circulated soon after Liu Xin wrote it appears in another poetic travelogue, written a few years after the *Sui chu fu*: the *Bei zheng fu* ("Northern Journey" *fu*) of Ban Biao (3–54 CE)⁵ was composed in 25 CE at Anding, Gansu, to recount Ban's journey from Chang'an to Tianshui, in southeastern Gansu.⁶ Two facts suggest that Ban may well have taken his inspiration from the *Sui chu fu*. First, both pieces concern a journey through much the same area. Second, a number of lines in the *Bei zheng fu* markedly resemble lines in the *Sui chu fu*, as below:

Bei zheng fu: 涉長路之繇繇兮 I trek the endless extent of the long road.
Sui chu fu: 路脩遠而繇繇 The road, long and measureless, stretches on and on.

Bei zheng fu: 劇蒙公之疲民兮 I condemn Sir Meng for wearying the people.
Sui chu fu: 劇彊秦之暴虐兮 I condemned the harsh cruelty of the mighty Qin.

Bei zheng fu: 迴千里而無家 Far, for a thousand leagues, there are no homes.
Sui chu fu: 迴百里而無家 Far, for a hundred leagues, there are no homes.

These resemblances cannot be coincidental. Unless one is prepared to claim that the *Sui chu fu* is not Liu Xin's composition, which could mean that it postdates the *Bei zheng fu*, it seems clear that Ban Biao's lines derive from the similar lines in the *Sui chu fu*. The twenty-one-chapter edition of the *Collection of Old Writings* contains a commentary by the Song scholar Zhang Qiao (fl. 1208); but despite several modern commentaries,⁷ modern scholarship has largely ignored this particular *fu* by Liu Xin.⁸

Part of the preface and a short extract are preserved in the authoritative *Yiwen leiju* (*Anthology of Literary Excerpts Arranged by Categories*, comp. 624 CE).⁹ According to the preface, not written by Liu Xin, but by a later editor, "At this time the court administration had numerous failed policies. Xin had been expelled from the court for his opinions and was unable to fulfill his ambitions. On the way to his post he passed through the ancient territory of the state of Jin. Moved by the present and reflecting on the past, he wrote this *fu* to sigh about his journey and to convey his personal thoughts." Jin was one of the most powerful states of the period treated in the *Chunqiu* (*Annals*); accordingly, the *Zuo Traditions* amply documents events concerning Jin. As we shall see, in the *Sui chu fu* Liu Xin uses the *Zuo Traditions* to comment, not only on past history, but on contemporary events at the late Western Han imperial court.

Meaning of the Title *Sui chu*

The title *Sui chu*, taken from the first line of the piece, has been variously explained. The *Hanyu dacidian* dictionary provides two explanations.¹⁰ The first gloss is that *sui chu* means "previously" or "before" (*zaoxian, yiqian*). *Hanyu dacidian* cites only one example of this use, a line from the "Harmonious Marriage" *fu* (*Xiehe hun fu*) ascribed to Cai Yong (ca. 133–192 CE),¹¹ while noting the variant reading of *sui* 邃 for *sui* 遂, which occurs in the *Collection of Old Writings* version; similarly, Zhang Qiao glosses *sui chu* as "in the remote past" (*wang gu*).¹² A second gloss the *Hanyu dacidian* gives for *sui chu* is "to fulfill one's original desire" (*sui qi chuyuan*), which it then explains as "to resign from office and thereafter live in reclusion" (*quguan yinju*). The example cited is a later *fu* by Sun Chuo (314–371 CE), also titled *Sui chu fu*. According to Sun Chuo's *Jinshu* (*History of the Jin*) biography, Sun "dwelt in Kuaiji for more than ten years, at which point he composed the *Sui chu fu* in order to convey his intent."¹³

Based on this explanation, the title of Sun Chuo's piece could be translated "Fulfilling My Original Resolve" *fu*. Presumably following this later use, Fei Zhen'gang and his colleagues explain that *sui chu* in Liu Xin's *fu* "means to resign from office to fulfill an original desire to withdraw into reclusion."¹⁴ Unfortunately, it does not seem that Liu Xin used *sui chu* in this sense, for if one carefully examines the full first line of the piece, *sui* clearly functions as a verb; furthermore, Liu Xin's *Sui chu fu* is hardly about reclusion. I understand *sui* as a verb to mean "to carry out," "to succeed," "to complete," or "to fulfill." I translate the first line literally as "In the past I fulfilled my first illustrious emolument," an unambiguous reference to obtaining a good position at the Western Han court. The line says nothing about resigning office or going into reclusion. For this title, then, which is almost untranslatable, the best I can do is to render it "Obtaining My First Official Post" *fu*.¹⁵

Content of the *Sui chu fu*

This title, however, does not really designate the main theme of Liu Xin's *fu*; rather, it exemplifies the common practice, occurring as far back as the *Odes* classic, of using two words from the opening line as the title of a poem. The poem's theme can be derived from two categories into which the *Sui chu fu* has been traditionally placed: the travel (*xinglü*) category, according to *Anthology of Literary Excerpts*; and the expressing intent (*yan zhi*) category, according to the Qing *fu* collection *Lidai fuhui* (*Collection of Fu from throughout the Ages*).¹⁶ Both categories point to important thematic features of Liu's *Sui chu fu*. First, the *Sui chu fu* is arguably the earliest *fu* to recount an actual journey; *fu* written prior to Liu Xin portray imaginary journeys. The only putative examples of an account of an actual journey are several compositions in the "Jiu zhang" ("Nine Declarations") of the *Chuci* (*Songs of Chu*), said to record the semilegendary Qu Yuan's travels as an exile in southern Chu. For example, the poem "She Jiang" ("Crossing the Yangzi") recounts Qu Yuan's voyage from the Wuchang area southwest to the Yuan River, which flows into Lake Dongting:

Scaling the Isle of E, I look back,¹⁷
 And sigh at the lingering winds of autumn and winter.
 I walk my horses at the mountain side,
 And halt my chariot at Fanglin.
 I board a windowed boat to travel up the Yuan,
 With even strokes the great oars beat the swells.
 The boat goes so slowly, we do not advance.
 Slowed by the whirling waters, we are stalled.
 At dawn we depart Wang Isle,
 At dusk we spend the night at Chenyang.¹⁸

Because authorship of the “Nine Declarations” is questionable, these travelogues may be a later poet’s attempt to construct an itinerary for Qu Yuan’s period of exile. A further reason to posit a later author is that the places mentioned seem to have no historical or symbolic importance to the poet. By late Eastern Han (ca. 200 CE), and especially during the Wei-Jin period (third–fifth centuries CE), the distinguishing feature of travel-themed *fu* was place names with historical associations on which the poet comments and reflects.¹⁹

Another important *fu* tradition to which the *Sui chu fu* belongs is what Hellmut Wilhelm called the “*fu* of frustration.”²⁰ Frustration *fu* can be traced back to the poems attributed to Qu Yuan, notably Qu’s most famous *Lisao* (*Encountering Sorrow*). In this category, the poet expresses anger against a corrupt society, complains that the court and ruler do not appreciate him, and even goes so far as condemning cruel fate. However, in the *Sui chu fu*, Liu Xin does not bemoan his fate; instead he reconciles himself to making the best of what has befallen him.

Liu Xin begins with a series of astronomical metaphors that portray the imperial court:

In times past, when I attained my first illustrious emolument,
I encountered the opening wide of the palace gates.
Treading the Treble Platform, upward I journeyed,
And entered the Purple Palace of the Northern Asterism.

The Treble Platform (San Tai) is a six-star constellation in Ursa Major; it is another name for the Grand Stairway mentioned below.²¹ Here it stands for the imperial court, where Liu Xin began his official career. Gong Kechang says the Treble Platform represents the Three Lords of the Executive Council (San Gong), which in Liu Xin’s time were the Chancellor, the Imperial Counsellor, and the Marshal of State.²² The Imperial Counsellor would have been Liu Xin’s superior when he was editing the manuscripts in the imperial archives. The Purple Palace represents the imperial palace, and the Northern Asterism stands for the seat of imperial power.²³

In the next section, Liu Xin uses star images to represent some of the positions he held at the imperial court:

I filled the post of Angular Array in the heavenly mansions,
And guarded the Pivot and Pole of grand constancy.
I harnessed six dragons to Quadriga and Chamber,
I held up the flowery canopy at the emperor’s side.

The heavenly mansions here represent the array of court officials and bureaus. The Angular Array is a group of six stars located outside the Purple Palace of Heaven that supposedly oversaw the celestial guard protecting that palace.²⁴ Here it probably refers

to Liu Xin's position as Colonel of the Central Ramparts. The Pivot is the first star of the Northern Dipper, while the Pole (Ji) is the Polestar we know so well.²⁵ Here Pivot and Pole stand for the seat of imperial authority. The term translated as "grand constancy" (*dachang* or *taichang*) is unclear. "Taichang" is the name for the Han Commissioner of Ceremonial (a second post related to Liu Xin), but here it probably refers to a star, since all the other lines in this section use star names to represent government offices. Zhang Qiao cites the *Shiji's* "Treatise on Astronomy" to explain the line: "In the Central Palace, the Heavenly Polestar is the brightest; it is the permanent residence of the [god] Grand Unity (Taiyi)."²⁶ Unfortunately, Zhang's explication, which says nothing about *taichang*, seems perfunctory. According to Gong Kechang, *taichang* alludes to the Tai-chang banner on which the sun and moon were drawn; because the banner was used only by the emperor, it signified the emperor.²⁷ If so, perhaps Liu Xin is simply saying that he served in the imperial palace. The four stars in the Chamber (Fang) constellation constitute the fourth lunar mansion; these together formed the Ming Tang (usually rendered as Bright Hall or Devotional Hall), the celestial palace from which the emperor supposedly disseminated his good rule.²⁸ Another name for the Chamber was Celestial Quadriga (Tiansi), referring to the splendid horse-drawn carriages of Heaven. Surely this and the fourth line above refer to Liu Xin's position as Commandant of Imperial Carriages. Flowery Canopy is a nine-star constellation corresponding to stars in Cassiopeia that hung above the Imperial Throne.²⁹ On Earth, imperial processions also used a carriage with a flowery canopy. Again, this would point to Liu Xin's position as Commandant.

Continuing his use of astronomical metaphors, Liu Xin recounts why he had to leave the imperial court and take up his position in exile in the Henei area:

Verily was the Grand Stairway broad and vast,
And thus the Transverse and Armil were hard to turn.
Fearing those before and behind the Bowl and Handle,
I descended and landed on the Yellow River shore.

By a synecdoche, the Grand Stairway, another name for the Treble Platform, represents the imperial court. Liu Xin seems to be saying that the courtiers were so many that talented men, lost in the crowd, could not attract notice and thereby acquire positions of authority. Reference is made to the Transverse and Armil, the fifth and third stars, respectively, of the Northern Dipper.³⁰ Gong Kechang takes this to mean that the Three Lords of the Executive Council, being arrogant and overbearing, made it difficult for Liu Xin to implement Aidi's will.³¹ Bowl and Handle are two additional parts of the Northern Dipper.³² Here, presumably, they again represent the central authority of the imperial court, which Liu Xin offended with his proposals to replace the Modern Script versions of the classics with the Archaic Script versions. The "Yellow River shore" refers to his posting to Henei, a location whose literal meaning is "within [the area of the] Yellow River."

Liu concludes this section by recounting how he had to leave the area of the Yellow River and journey to the far north in Wuyuan:

I encountered the waters of Lord Yang full and overflowing,
Riding upon the white waves, I became sad and sorrowful.
Having obtained the auspicious omen of the Dark Warrior,
I went to guard the beacon towers of Wuyuan.

Lord Yang, god of the waves, probably stands for the waters of the Yellow River, which Liu had to cross after leaving Henei. The Dark Warrior (Xuanwu) is the seven northernmost lunar mansions;³³ it also stands for the northernmost limits of the empire, the frontiers of Wuyuan, where Liu Xin took up his post as Governor.

Once Liu Xin is across the Yellow River, the account of his journey from Henei to Wuyuan begins. In the following lines he mentions the mountain barrier that separates the capital from the rugged and desolate territory through which he had to travel. (During the period covered by the *Zuo Traditions*, this territory belonged to the ancient kingdom of Jin.)

For two chariot teams I waited,
My coachmen expected to meet me on the road.
We galloped through the forbidding fastness of Taihang,
Entered the towering pass of Tianjing.

The Taihang Mountains formed the northern boundary of Henei Commandery. Tianjing, north of Henei, is a major pass through those mountains.

Throughout this section of the *fu*, Liu Xin focuses on the reign of one Jin ruler, Lord Ping (r. 557–532 BCE). Despite his posthumous name, which means the Peaceful Lord, Lord Ping is famous in Chinese history for profligacy and neglect of his duties, which eventually led to the usurpation of his authority by nobles from lesser families. Eventually these nobles deposed Lord Ping's successor, and three powerful families divided the state of Jin into three separate states. One of Liu Xin's favorite texts, the *Zuo Traditions*, dwells on the history behind this division of the original Jin kingdom. As Liu Xin's readers would have known that history well, Liu can encapsulate that history in a few short lines:

I lamented the waning Zhou house had lost its power to rule,
It was often denigrated, having no one to support it.
Jin seized Sun Kuai at Tunliu,
And rescued the king's army at Xuwu.

In the lines preceding these, Liu Xin mentions passing through Changzi, in Shanxi.

Now Liu Xin refers to an event that took place there in 556 BCE: Shi Mai and Sun Kuai, officers of the state of Wei, led an attack against Cao, in which they seized the small city-state of Zhongqiu, in Shandong.³⁴ Cao appealed to mighty Jin for redress, and sure enough, the following year the Jin forces captured Shi Mai at Changzi and Sun Kuai at the Jin capital of Tunliu, in Shanxi.³⁵

Continuing on his journey, Liu Xin reached Xiasi, a Han settlement in Tongdi county. In this area, Lord Ping had constructed the Siqi Palace (or Terrace), which appears in the following lines:³⁶

I sighed as I passed Xiasi,
Despondent over Lord Ping's construction of a terrace there.
Turning his back on Ancestral Zhou, he showed it no solicitude.
Snatching momentary pleasures, he was slothful and lazy.

Here Liu Xin clearly has in mind several passages in the *Zuo Traditions*. The first, recorded in the eighth year of Lord Zhao, tells of envoys from several kingdoms who traveled to Jin to congratulate Lord Ping on the construction of the monumentally ostentatious Xiasi Palace. The diviner³⁷ Zhao admonished the envoys, saying, "How greatly you deceive one another! When you should be lamenting, you offer congratulations!"³⁸ A second relevant *Zuo Traditions* passage, this time from the twenty-ninth year of Lord Xiang's reign, tells of Lord Ping's assumption of control over the affairs of the Qi, which also claimed descent from the Xia ruling house. When an assembly was held to discuss fortifying the Qi capital, someone objected, saying, "How is it that Jin is unconcerned about the failings of its ancestral house of Zhou and instead protects the remnants of the [the former ruling house of] Xia?"³⁹

In the next two lines, Liu Xin delivers his stark assessment of Lord Ping's failure to realize that his own conduct was imperiling the Jin ruling house:

Branches and leaves were falling, but he did not notice;
The ducal clan was devastated, devoid of good men.
Day in, day out, without compunction, he went to ever greater extremes;
Rule was conferred on and relegated to heads of the clans.

The phrase "branches and leaves were falling" comes from a speech by a Jin noble, Shuxiang, as recorded in the *Zuo Traditions*.⁴⁰ During the reign of Lord Ping, Shuxiang predicted the fall of the Jin ruling house, saying, "The clans of the ducal house of Jin are about to come to an end. I have heard that, when the ducal house is about to be brought low, the branches and leaves of the ducal clans will fall first, and the ruler himself will follow soon thereafter!"⁴¹ Liu Xin's phrase "devoid of good men" (more literally, "alone, there is no one") comes from the *Changes* classic, hexagram 55.⁴² In the last two lines above, he draws from the same speech by Shuxiang: "Rule now lies in the hands of the

clan heads. The people have no one on whom to rely, and the ruler daily continues without showing any regret, submerging his sorrow by means of pleasure.”⁴³

These strophes were hardly Liu Xin’s disinterested comments on ancient history. They likely paralleled the turpitude Liu Xin found at the late Western Han court of his own time. As a noble of the same surname as the Han ruling house, Liu Xin had inexplicably become estranged from its imperial court. The emperors under whom he served were effete and ineffectual, like Lord Ping of Jin. Just as the ducal administration fell into the hands of influential clans of a different name, the Western Han court was increasingly dominated by officials from the consort clans. Liu Xin follows this observation with eight lines that comment directly on the behavior of officials at the court:

Wearing fork-tipped clogs for hats, they dictated court attire
And they took off their leather caps and used them for shoes.
They treasured pebbles and stones in temples and halls,
Spurning gems of Sui and He, they did not deign to look at them.
Lord Ping began the decline and created disorder,
From this the ducal house was brought low.
I pitied the last Jin ruler who had only a temporary dwelling,
I mourned Lord Jing at Tongdi.

In the first four lines above, Liu Xin uses the common topos of the world upside down to portray the court as a place where good values have been subverted. Courtiers wear footwear on their heads and headgear on their feet;⁴⁴ they spurn precious gems and treasure ordinary rocks. Liu Xin then refers again to Lord Ping, whom he blamed for the fall of the Jin ducal house, although that downfall occurred 156 years after Lord Ping’s demise, in 376 BCE, during the last year of Lord Jing (r. 377–376 BCE).⁴⁵ Tongdi, as noted above, was the location of the large traveling palace built by Lord Ping, described in the *Zuo Traditions* by the exemplary minister Zichan as extending for several miles.⁴⁶ Liu Xin implies that Lord Jing, after his deposal, took up temporary residence there.

Clearly, the person from the past with whom Liu Xin most identifies is the Jin noble Shuxiang, a central figure in the *Zuo Traditions*;⁴⁷ Shuxiang served as tutor to Lord Dao (r. 572–558 BCE) of Jin and his son, Lord Ping. As we have seen, Shuxiang with great prescience predicted the demise of the Jin ruling house. The *Zuo Traditions* also recounts the story of Shuxiang being slandered by his political opponents, whose maneuverings put Shuxiang into prison. Liu Xin refers to that event in the following lines:

After passing through Houjia, I made a long gallop;
Someone saved Shuxiang from impending disaster.
Pleased that a good man was rescued,
I offer thanks to Qi Xi at Taiyuan.

In 552 BCE the Jin minister Fan Xuanzi ordered the execution of Shuxiang's younger brother Yangshe Hu and nine other Jin nobles, charging them with conspiring with Luan Ying, a rival of the Fan clan. When Fan also imprisoned Shuxiang, Shuxiang refused help from Yuewang Fu on the grounds that only Qi Xi could save him. Qi Xi, a retired Jin grandee with a fief in Qi, made the following plea on Shuxiang's behalf: "Shuxiang is an example of one who seldom goes astray when advising and who is untiring in giving kind instruction. He is the bulwark of our state altars. Ten generations of his family should be pardoned from crimes in order to encourage such a man of ability. Now just because of a one-time offense [of his younger brother], Shuxiang may not escape with his life. This would result in our abandoning our state altars. Is this not gravely mistaken?" Upon hearing this, Fan Xuanzi came to his senses, with the result that he urged his lord to pardon Shuxiang.⁴⁸

Liu Xin offers the following comments on this event:

How could a man so fond of uprightness as Master Shu
Be slandered by the villainous crowd?
He relied on a single word from Master Qi,
Yet he almost did not escape death.

It may not be a stretch to read these lines as Liu Xin's presenting himself as the latter-day Western Han counterpart of Shuxiang, for like Shuxiang, Liu Xin was a loyal official attacked by enemies at court. And although Liu Xin was never imprisoned, he was forced to leave the court and endure banishment to a remote place in the barren, uncultivated north. No wonder the *Sui chu fu* was placed in the "expressing intent" category.

Liu Xin then gives examples of men of integrity who suffered slander and maltreatment. He begins with Confucius himself, followed by Qu Yuan, Liuxia Hui, and Qu Boyu:

Of old, a man as wise and good as Confucius
Met with straitened circumstances in Cai and Chen.
Qu Yuan, that man of integrity and resolve,
In the end was exiled, and drowned himself in the Xiang depths.
How hard for the principled and upright to gain acceptance!
Liuxia was demoted—thrice was he humiliated.
Having been suppressed, Qu Boyu twice fled the state.
How were his talent and wisdom insufficient?

The allusion to Confucius comes from *Analects* 15.2. When Confucius was traveling in the state of Chen, his provisions ran out and his disciples were so weak and ill that they could not even rise up. Zilu at that point asked the Master, "Must even superior

men suffer privation, so that they are at their wit's end (*qiong*)?" To this Confucius replied, "They do suffer indeed!" The story of Qu Yuan is well known, and here Liu Xin singles out Qu's forced exile and consequent suicide in the Miluo River, a tributary of the Xiang. Liuxia Hui, a native of Lu, was three times dismissed during his tenure as chief judge.⁴⁹ Qu Boyu was a Counsellor in the state of Wei until 559 BCE, when he left that state upon realizing the cruelty and tyranny of Lord Xian (r. 576–559 BCE). When Lord Xian was removed from the throne in 559 BCE, he fled to Qi, whereupon Qu Boyu returned to Wei. But only twelve years later, in 547 BCE, Qu Boyu left Wei again after hearing that Lord Xian had plans to resume the Wei throne.⁵⁰

Liu Xin's identification with these great figures of the past seems clear. Like them, he has been vilified and banished from the court. Indeed, in the following lines, Liu Xin lapses into an *Encountering Sorrow*-like complaint about the petty jealousies that infect the court, thinly disguised in a common trope as the ugly jealousy of the harem ladies toward the most beautiful woman in the court:

Those who flaunt their pretty eyebrows always meet with jealousy;
Jealousy is in the nature of ugly women.
Warped wood detests the straight marking line;
This [jealousy] is the nature of the petty man as well.

At the same time Liu Xin does not absolve Shuxiang, Confucius, Qu Yuan, and the others of responsibility for their destinies:

Considering the broad vision of these great men,
Why was this course inevitable?
In vain did they waste time glowering at the world;
Thus bringing disaster upon themselves.

I take these lines not so much as criticism of Shuxiang, Confucius, and Qu Yuan, but as a statement of the futility of contending with hostile forces when the latter dominate the court. The reasons for this particular reading will become clearer as we get to the end of the *fu*.

Liu Xin briefly turns his attention once more to the history of Jin:

I am sad that ingrained habits become the norm;
This is certainly something the perceptive and wise can discern.
Once the venerable clans had been reduced to menials,
The six ministerial clans arose and reigned supreme.

These lines refer to the six-year civil war at the end of the fifth century BCE between the leading Zhao, Fan, and Zhonghang ministerial clans, which drastically weakened

the ducal house of Jin. In a speech by Yan Ying recorded in the *Zuo Traditions*,⁵¹ Shu-xiang lamented that the eight clans that traditionally had provided ministers for the state of Jin “had been reduced to [the status of] menial servants,” supplanted by ministers from the six clans of Fan, Zhonghang, Zhi, Zhao, Han, and Wei.

In the following four lines, Liu Xin engages in a type of criticism typically found in the *Annals* classic and its commentaries. Known as “praise and blame” (*bao bian*), this method or mode of interpretation assumed that Confucius compiled the *Annals* to pass judgment on the morality and wisdom of leading figures whose histories are recorded in the annals of his home state of Lu.

Xun Yin gave free rein to imperious impulses;
Jishe rebelled and took control of the army.
Detesting vassals such as these,
I blamed Zhao Yang at Jinyang.

Xun Yin was a Jin minister from the Zhonghang clan. In 497 BCE Zhao Yang, Viscount Jian of Zhao, requested that the minister of Handan, Zhao Wu, hand over five hundred captive families of Wei then residing in Handan, so they could be transferred to Jinyang, southwest of present-day Taiyuan. Zhao Wu initially agreed, but the elders of his family objected, forcing him to renege. For going back on his word, Zhao Yang put Zhao Wu to death. In retaliation, Zhao Wu’s son, Zhao Ji, rebelled in Handan. Xun Yin and his son-in-law Fan Jishe took advantage of the situation to attack Zhao Yang, who promptly fled to Jinyang, where he was soon surrounded by the Jin army forces. Zhao Yang made peace with Lord Ding of Jin. Less than three years later, in 494 BCE, the army led by Zhao Yang surrounded Xun Yin and Fan Jishe at Zhaoge, in Henan, where they had taken refuge. In 491 BCE Xun Yin suffered a final defeat and fled to the state of Qi. From that time on, the Fan and Zhonghang clans held no power in Jin at all, despite their noble status.⁵² The last line in the passage cited above is very much in the form of “praise and blame.” It may reflect the terse statement ascribed to Confucius in the *Annals*: “Zhao Yang of Jin entered Jinyang in order to rebel.”⁵³

From Jinyang, Liu Xin began the long trek to Wuyuan, near present-day Baotou in Inner Mongolia. First he had to go northwest to cross the Gouzhu Mountains, in Shanxi. Having passed through the frontier outposts of Yanmen and Yunzhong, he arrived at Linwo, a Han county seat not far from the administrative center of Wuyuan Commandery. Liu Xin proceeds to describe the harsh, bare landscape of the Wuyuan Plain:

The wind, silently blowing, is barely descried,
Sand and dust rise, darkening the sky.
A whirlwind comes up suddenly, fast and swift;
Swirling, it shivers and shakes, soughs and sighs.
Pressing in, a gelid mass of ice

Fills gully and valley with a chilling cold.
 As the glistening whiteness of piled snow drifts about,
 I cross heavy hoar frost—frozen dew.
 Flying hail and sleet cover the ground,
 I sigh that the springs are frozen solid.
 Shards of melting ice swiftly flow,
 I peer into the hidden depths of a nine-fold pool.
 Southing sad and sorrowful, dolorous and drear,
 A plaintive wind blows hard, biting cold.
 Beasts, wary and watchful, skulk into dens;
 Folding their wings, birds crouch and cower.
 Mountains whine and whistle with the cries of yellow cranes.
 Trees, decaying and dying, moan and sob.
 The earth erupted in an angry frenzy,
 Boulders, split and shattered, stand sheer and sharp.
 The heavens, mighty and majestic, float on high,
 Broad and open, empty and vast.
 Geese, honking loudly, slowly glide by;
 Wild storks cry out, screeching and squawking.
 I gaze upon the glowing brightness of the beacon stations,
 Where flying banners and pennons flap and flutter.
 Around me for a hundred leagues there are no homes;
 The road, long and measureless, stretches on and on.

I previously wrote as follows about these lines: “This long passage is remarkable for its vivid description of the barren Ordos plain, where the cold wind incessantly blows, darkening the sky with dust and sand, and freezing rivers and springs. The rough terrain through which Liu Xin must pass serves as a counterpart to the obstacles that have recently blocked his official career.”⁵⁴ At this point in the *fu*, Liu Xin begins to reflect on the duties that he must perform in this frontier outpost:

And then, in command of the frontier outpost, I shall firmly defend it,
 And exert the spirited dedication of Wuling.
 I shall display the strategic genius of Zhao She;
 My fearsome plans will keep things intact as a solid fortress.
 Without, I shall repel the enemy so there are no worries for the state;
 Within, I shall care for the people to ensure enduring peace.

Liu Xin compares himself to two famous military figures of the Zhanguo period (475–222 BCE) who distinguished themselves near Liu’s route or his post. First mentioned is King Wuling of Zhao (r. 325–299 BCE), famous for adopting the cavalry dress

and mounted archery of the northern tribes, despite stiff opposition from some of his own court officials. In 300 BCE, King Wuling's mounted archers invaded the state of Zhongshan, capturing territory as far north as Yan and Dai and as far west as Yunzhong and Jiuyuan, in Han times a county in Wuyuan Commandery.⁵⁵ Zhao She, a famous Zhao general, in 270 BCE relieved the Qin siege of the Zhao outpost of Yanyu, by halting west of Wu'an (in Hebei) and building a wall around his camp. After luring the Qin army into complacency, Zhao She defeated the besieging forces with a surprise attack.⁵⁶

Liu Xin concludes the main body of the *Sui chu fu* with another long sequence (this time of fourteen lines), stating his determination to accept his fate without complaint:

Calm and carefree, I am content with myself;
 Fearful only of the severe cold.
 Dwelling in a dark chamber, secluded and warm,
 I cleanse my turbid filth in Grand Purity.
 I restore my original nature in solitary silence;
 I let my trifling form dwell in dark profundity.
 I play with zither and books to attain comfort and ease,
 And I examine the changing features of life and fate.
 As the four seasons revolve, I observe yin and yang,
 And take in the precious wonders of the myriad things.
 Although I investigate the ultimate changes of heaven-and-earth,
 How is that worth any concern from me?
 To be ever quiet and calm, happy and joyful,
 Certainly in these the sage and worthy take delight.

Given the militaristic tone of the preceding section, these lines are something of a surprise, for here we see Liu Xin adopting a quiescent, tranquil tone that recalls writings of the Daoist cast. Liu Xin seems to be saying that during his time in the northern frontier, he has attained a measure of peace and tranquility, such that he now fears nothing but the severe cold. The language at this point is somewhat ambiguous, however. First, Liu Xin says “[I] dwell in a dark chamber, secluded and warm” (*you qian wen zhi xuan zhi*). Fei Zhen'gang and his colleagues render the subsequent line as, “Where I apply my mind to the study of *xuanxue*” (Mystery Learning, arcane learning),⁵⁷ which reading would attest that Mystery Learning originated in late Western Han, as some scholars say.⁵⁸ The same term, *xuanshi*, is used by the late Han thinker and writer Xu Gan (170–217/218 CE) to mean a room suitable for storing a precious treasure.⁵⁹ I construe the line more literally, as a “dark chamber” in which a person can quietly meditate and contemplate. I have tentatively understood the binomial phrase translated as “secluded warmth” (*qian wen*) as the dark chamber affording protection against the bracing cold. The term “grand purity” or “grand clarity” (*taiqing*), so important in later religious Daoism, is already attested in the *Zhuangzi* (*Master Zhuang*): “Like water [the Real-

ized Person] flows into the Formless, and issues forth from Grand Clarity.”⁶⁰ The line in the *Sui chu fu* designates Grand Purity as the place where the poet purges himself. Perhaps Liu Xin fancied himself a potential or actual Realized Person, since the next couplet has him “restoring his original nature in solitary silence.” The line that follows this one contains yet another obscure term: *hua ti* (trifling form). Fei Zhen’gang and his colleagues explain it as equivalent to “precious body” (*yu ti*), which is plausible;⁶¹ on the other hand, Gong Kechang glosses it as “insubstantial body” (*fuhua de quti*), which I have tried to capture in English with my translation.⁶²

Liu Xin was not completely quiescent in his “dark chamber,” he reports. He seems to have passed his time playing the zither, reading, and writing, the conventional pursuits of the highly cultivated recluse. Mainly, however, he focused on observing the cosmic movements of yin and yang *qi* (spirit, vital energy). Although he came to realize that change is the only constant in the cosmos, this realization does not perturb him. He resolves, like a great sage, to remain “ever quiet and calm, happy and joyful.”

The *Sui chu fu* ends with an epilogue (*luan*) in which Liu Xin states his conclusion:

Favor and good fortune are fleeting sojourns,
Randomly occurring, inconstant.
Whether one stays or departs,
No harm occurs either way.
By the measure of the great man,
All things are the same.
The error that caused me to give up my position
Suddenly seems forgotten.
Seeking position and attaining one,
This indeed is common and normal.
Maintaining my honesty, preserving integrity,
I compare myself to Old Peng.

Here Liu Xin finally comes to terms with the reversals in his life. Court favor and high position are transitory, and, in the cosmic view of things, whatever has befallen him is of little or no consequence; as Zhuangzi asserts, “all things are one and the same” (*qi wu*). When all is said and done, living in such a remote place has been an inadvertent blessing; enforced solitary contemplation and introspection, Liu Xin claims, have finally given him a more detached view of the world. While these affirmations may adopt a Daoist tone, Liu Xin ends on a distinctly “Confucian” note: although it is perfectly reasonable and proper for a man to pursue an official career, it is even more important for him to preserve his moral integrity. And so, in his concluding line, Liu Xin alludes to *Analects* 7.1, which has Confucius saying, “I transmit but do not create. I am faithful to and devoted to the Ancients. I venture to compare myself to Old Peng.”⁶³ Although the identity of Old Peng remains uncertain, Liu Xin may have followed the

same tradition as his near contemporary, the *Analects* commentator Bao Xian (6 BCE–65 CE), who said that Old Peng was a Yin dynasty official fond of “relating events of antiquity.”⁶⁴

In Liu Xin’s line “I compare myself to Old Peng,” Nakajima Chiaki sees Liu Xin’s reaffirmation of his devotion to learning and scholarship.⁶⁵ And if Liu Xin thought of Old Peng as a narrator of ancient history, his declaration may also indicate his intention to persist with studying the Archaic Script versions of the classics, especially the *Zuo Traditions*, which is the text to which Liu Xin consistently resorts throughout the *Sui chu fu*. As Liu Xin deemed the *Zuo* a reliable account of the events of the Chunqiu period, perhaps he thought that preserving it and elevating its status would make him an emulator of those great “transmitters” of ancient lore and knowledge, Old Peng and Confucius.

Liu Xin did not remain long in Wuyuan. Circa 4 BCE he was transferred to be Governor of Zhuo Commandery (present-day Hebei). He also served as Commandant of the dependent state of Anding. In 1 BCE, Liu Xin returned to the imperial court and high positions in the regency and ruling house under Wang Mang. In 23 CE he was implicated in an attempted coup to overthrow Wang Mang—with whose governance he had grown disillusioned—and he was executed.

Appendix: Comparison of *Sui chu fu* Versions

There exist two complete versions of the *Sui chu fu*: one in the nine-juan version in the *Guwen yuan* (*Collection of Old Writings*); the other in the twenty-one-juan version of the same anthology. The compiler of the *Collection of Old Writings* is not known, but a likely candidate is Sun Zhu (1032–1080 CE), *zi* Juyuan, who claimed to have discovered the collection in a shrine of a Buddhist temple, after it was deposited there during the Tang dynasty.⁶⁶ Recently, Wang Xiaojuan has proposed that the first editor of the work was the Song epigrapher Wang Houzhi (1132–1204 CE).⁶⁷ My research leads me to believe that Han Yuanji (1118–1187 CE) was the first to edit and print the work in nine *juan*, in 1179, in Wuzhou (present-day Jinhua, Zhejiang). In 1232 (Shaoding 5), Zhang Qiao (fl. 1208) added poems and provided a commentary. Zhang Qiao’s version comprises twenty-one *juan*.⁶⁸ Here, in alternating strophes, I present some of the major differences between the two *Sui chu fu* versions:

21-juan version: For two chariot teams I waited, 二乘駕而既俟，

9-juan version: My coachmen expected to meet me on the road.

僕夫期而在塗。

21-juan version: We galloped through the forbidding fastness of Taihang,

馳太行之嚴防兮，

9-juan version: Entered the towering pass of Tianjing.

入天井之喬關。

The nine-*juan* version of the first line indicates a lacuna after the character *zai* 在. *Tu* 涂, at the end of that line, is in the *yu* 魚 rhyme group, and it would not ordinarily rhyme with *guan* 關, at the end of the second nine-*juan* line, which is in the *yuan* 元 rhyme group; this suggests some problem in the text. The *Qinding xieyun huiji* proposes that *guan* should be read *gu* here, but cites no other example of that pronunciation for *guan*.⁶⁹ I suspect that Zhang Qiao added *tu* to fill in what he thought was the sense of the line. Since it does not rhyme, however, *tu* must be wrong.

The following passage from the twenty-one-*juan* version also shows a significant variation between the two versions of the piece:

I lamented that the waning Zhou house	
had lost its power of rule,	哀哀周之失權兮，
It was often denigrated and had no one to support it.	數困辱而莫扶。
Jin seized Sun Kuai at Tunliu,	執孫蒯于屯留兮，
And rescued the royal troops at Xuwu.	救王師於余吾。

Zhang Qiao explains the line “[Jin] rescued the royal troops at Xuwu” by citing the following event from the *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo Traditions*), in the first year of Lord Cheng: in 590 BCE the ruler of Jin sent Jia of Xia to the Zhou court to make peace between the Zhou and Rong. But Lord Kang of Liu, a Zhou vassal, wished to and did attack the Rong, with the result that the Zhou troops suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Xuwushi, presumably a branch of the Rong group. But the connection between Jin’s capture of Sun Kuai (line three above) and their rescue of the Zhou troops at Xuwu 余吾 (also written Xuwu 徐吾) is anything but clear to this reader. Tunliu and Xuwu are not far apart in space, but the capture of Sun Kuai (and Shi Mai) took place in 555 BCE, whereas Zhou’s defeat by the Xuwushi and rescue by Jin took place in 590 BCE, thirty-five years before. Understandably, the *Zuo Traditions* account of Sun Kuai’s capture does not mention the Xuwushi or the place called Xuwu. In the nine-*juan* version, this line reads “And rescued the king’s army on the road” (*jiu wang shi yu Tuwu* 救王師於途吾). By taking the character 吾 (in the sense of “I”) to be the subject of the subsequent line, one could conceivably translate “*jiu wang shi yu tu wu*” as “Jin rescued the king’s army on the road.” Zhang Binglin (1868–1936 CE) translates it exactly thus in his notes to the *Zuo Traditions* passage concerning Shi Mai and Sun Kuai. Zhang argues that Liu Xin was following the tradition that, when Shi Mai and Sun Kuai attacked Cao, Zhou came to the aid of Cao, but was then defeated by Wei. When the people of Cao applied to Jin for redress, Jin came to the rescue of the “king’s army” and captured Shi Mai and Sun Kuai.⁷⁰ Although Zhang Binglin’s interpretation is highly speculative, it has the attraction of avoiding the puzzling reference to Xuwu.

The next passage in the nine-*juan* version reads:

After passing through Houjia, I made a long gallop;
Someone saved Shuxiang from impending disaster.
Pleased that a good man was rescued,
I offer thanks to Qi Xi at Taiyuan.

越侯甲而長驅兮，
釋叔向之飛患。
悅善人之有救兮，
勞祁奚於太原。

In the twenty-one *juan* version, the first line above reads “Houtian,” a post station in Huai county of Henei Commandery (south of present-day Wuzhi, Henan). Since this place is near Liu Xin’s departure point, the text must be wrong. “Houjia,” in the nine-*juan* version is correct. The *Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*, comp. by 527 CE), quotes this passage and similarly reads Houjia instead of Houtian, stating that Houjia was the name of a river that had its source in the Hujia Mountains of Qi county. (Hujia and Houjia are likely variants of the same name.) The *Water Classic Commentary* goes on to say, “The Hujia Mountains have a long slope called Hujia Peak. This is what Liu Xin referred to when he said, ‘After passing through Houjia, I made a long gallop.’”⁷¹ “Houjia” also better fits the route of Liu Xin’s journey. If Liu Xiang made “a long gallop” north of Tongdi, he would have passed through Houjia, which is near the area of Qi that Liu Xin mentions in the subsequent lines of the *fu*.

Notes

- 1 For this date, see Lu Kanru 1985, 5. On Liu Xin’s dates and life, see also Qian Mu [1958] 2001, 1–163; Xu Xingwu 2005.
- 2 See Loewe’s *Biographical Dictionary*, 383–86, for a summary of Liu Xin’s life.
- 3 The text of the letter is in *Hanshu* 36.1968–72 and *Wenxuan* 43.195–55. For translations, see Fang 1958, vol. 2, 801–5; Chung 1982, 482–95; and the translation by Michael Loewe in this volume (see chapter 14).
- 4 For the nine-*juan* edition, see *Guwen yuan* (*Dainan ge congshu* ed.) 2.11a–14b; for the twenty-one-*juan* edition, see *Guwen yuan* (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 5.1b–7a. For the difference between these two editions, see below.
- 5 See *Wenxuan* 9.425–30.
- 6 See Lu Kanru 1985, vol. 1, 54–55.
- 7 See Qu Delai 2001, vol. 1, 389–98; Gong Kechang et al. 2003, vol. 1, 419–33; Fei et al. 2005, 316–26; Fei et al. 2006, 240–47; Zhao and Han 2010, vol. 2, 327–38.
- 8 The best study remains Nakajima 1963, 438–49. More recent studies, all quite short, are Zhang Yiqian 1997, 2002; and Jiang Wenyan 2004.
- 9 See *Yiwen leiju* 27.490.
- 10 See *Hanyu dacidian*, vol. 10, 1090A.
- 11 The full line is “Examining into the primordial origins, / We behold the ordering principles of yin and yang.” The translation is from Asselin 2010, 392.
- 12 See the *Guwen yuan* (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 20.4b for the twenty-one-*juan* version. *Cai Zhonglang ji* 3.1b (“Wai ji”) also reads *sui* 遂.
- 13 See *Jinshu* 56.1544.
- 14 See Fei et al. 2005, 319n1.
- 15 There is a paraphrase of this line in Qu Delai [1930] 2001, 390n1: 以往得遂獲得顯祿的愿望.
- 16 See Chen Yuanlong, *Lidai fuhui*, “Wai ji,” 2.567.

- 17 The Isle of E was located in the area of present-day Wuchang, Hubei.
- 18 See *Chuci buzhu* 4.129. Wang Isle, located south of present-day Changde, Hunan, is a small island in the Wang River, near where the Wang enters the Yuan River. Chenyang is probably the Han county of Chenyang, which was located west of present-day Chenxi, Hunan.
- 19 For a more detailed discussion, see Knechtges 1989, repr. in Knechtges 2002a. On the later travel tradition, see Tian Xiaofei 2011.
- 20 See Wilhelm 1957, 310–19, 398–403; Liu Renni 1974–75.
- 21 See *Jinshu* 11.293; Schlegel 1875, 529; Ho Peng-yoke 1961, 80–81. This constellation corresponds to the stars ι, κ, λ, μ, ν, ξ Ursae Minoris.
- 22 See Gong Kechang et al. 2003, vol. 1, 422–23n3.
- 23 See *Jinshu* 11.289; Ho 1966, 67; Schlegel [1875] 1967, 524.
- 24 See *Jinshu* 11.289; Ho 1966, 67. This group of stars includes δ, ε, ζ, and 6B Ursae Minoris, the Piazzzi star vi^h21 (46b Camelopardis) and 323B Cephei.
- 25 See *Jinshu* 11.290; Ho 1966, 79. The first star is Dubhe or α Ursae Majoris.
- 26 See *Shiji* 27.1289.
- 27 See Gong Kechang et al. 2003, vol. 1, 423n6.
- 28 These four stars correspond to β, δ, π, ρ Scorpis.
- 29 See *Jinshu* 11.290; Ho 1966, 69; Schlegel [1875] 1967, 533.
- 30 See *Jinshu* 11.270; Ho 1966, 77. The Transverse corresponds to ε Ursae Minoris, Alioth; the Armil, to β Ursae Minoris, Merak.
- 31 See Gong Kechang et al. 2003, vol. 1, 423n10.
- 32 Bowl (Kui) consists of the first four stars of the Northern Dipper (α, β, γ, δ, Ursae Minoris); Handle (Biao), the last three stars (ε, ζ, η Ursae Minoris). See *Jinshu* 11.270; Ho Peng-yoke 1966, 77; Schlegel [1875] 1967, 503.
- 33 See *Shiji* 27.1308.
- 34 Zhongqiu is probably southwest of present-day Renping, Shandong.
- 35 This event is fully recounted in *Zuozhuan*, Lord Xiang, Years 17–18.
- 36 Yang Bojun locates the Siqi Palace near present-day Houma, Shanxi. See *Chunqiu Zuozhuan*, vol. 4, 1301.
- 37 The term usually translated as “scribe” (*shi* 史) in fact refers to “diviners,” as several newly excavated manuscripts make clear, including those from Shuihudi and Zhangjiashan.
- 38 The Chinese is: 甚哉其相蒙! 可弔也, 而又賀之.
- 39 The Chinese is: 若之何哉! 晉國不恤周宗之闕, 而夏肄是屏.
- 40 See *Zuozhuan*, Lord Zhao, Year 3.
- 41 For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Li Wai-yee 2007, 350–55. The Chinese is: 晉之公族盡矣. 聞之, 公室將卑. 其宗族枝葉先落, 則公從之.
- 42 Specifically, the line text “Yang at the top line, Line 6.”
- 43 The Chinese is: 政在家門, 民無所依。君日不悛, 以樂悩憂.
- 44 The earliest use of this trope in *fu* occurs in “Lamenting Qu Yuan” (“Diao Qu Yuan”) by Jia Yi (ca. 200–168 BCE): “A ceremonial hat is padding for slippers.” See *Shiji* 84.2492.
- 45 In Lord Jing’s last year, the lords of the three most powerful clans—Wei, Han, and Zhao—deposed him and reduced him to the rank of commoner.
- 46 See *Zuozhuan*, Lord Xiang, Year 31: 今銅鞮之宮數里.
- 47 His surname was Yangshe; his personal name, Xi.
- 48 *Zuozhuan*, Lord Xiang, Year 21.
- 49 *Analects* 18.2.
- 50 See *Zuozhuan*, Lord Xiang, Years 14, 26.
- 51 *Zuozhuan*, Lord Zhao, Year 3.
- 52 *Zuozhuan*, Lord Ding, Year 13; Lord Ai, Years 3, 5.

- 53 *Zuozhuan*, Lord Ding, Year 13.
- 54 See Knechtges 1989, 136.
- 55 See *Zhanguoce*, 19.5b–9b; *Shiji* 43.1806–10.
- 56 See *Shiji* 81.2445.
- 57 I.e., *yushi jiu qian xin yu xuanxue*.
- 58 See Fei et al. 2006, 247. *Xuanshi* is a common term for “grave,” but that meaning clearly does not fit this context. See Zhang Heng, “Zhong fu,” in Zhang Zhengze 1986, 253: “I built a dark chamber.” See also Zuo Fen, “Yuan huanghou lei,” cited in *Jinshu* 31.960: “They completed a dark chamber.”
- 59 See *Zhong lun* A/1a: 譬如寶在於玄室.
- 60 See *Zhuangzi jishi* 10A.1047 (Guo Qingfan 1961).
- 61 See Fei et al. 2006, 245n76.
- 62 See Gong Kechang et al. 2003, vol. 1, 431n78.
- 63 The Chinese: 述而不作，信而好古，竊比於我老彭.
- 64 See *Analects* 7/1; *Lunyu zhushu* 7.5390, for “Old Peng.”
- 65 See Nakajima 1963, 444.
- 66 See the preface by Han Yuanji (1118–1187), which says, “Sun Juyuan obtained from a sutra niche in a Buddhist monastery the *Gu wenzhang* (*Ancient Writings*) by a person of the Tang period” 孫巨源於佛寺經龕中得唐人所藏古文章一編.
- 67 See Wang Xiaojuan 2008, 2009.
- 68 For a good study of the editions, see Wang Xiaojuan 2009, 113–19. On Zhang Qiao’s commentary, see Wang Xiaojuan 2010. A photoreproduction of the 1179 CE printing of the nine-juan version was issued in the *Zaizao shanben congshu* 2006. I am grateful to Professor Fu Gang of Peking University for supplying me with a copy of this work.
- 69 See *Qinding xieyun huiji* 4.12a–b.
- 70 See Zhang Taiyan (a.k.a. Zhang Binglin) 1982, 503.
- 71 See *Shuijing zhushu* 6.536.

Yang Yun's Biography, His Outlook, and His Poem

Jurij L. Kroll 科洛利

THE MOST DETAILED BIOGRAPHY OF YANG YUN IN ENGLISH IS BASED ON Yang's original biography in *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*),¹ supplemented by information from other *Hanshu* chapters. This general account of Yang Yun's life, however, does not provide even approximate dates for his birth, the beginning of his career, and his execution, expressing uncertainty about whether the latter took place after an investigation "following the solar eclipse . . . reported for 57 or for 54 BCE."² Another scholar does not provide a firm date for the beginning of Yang's career, placing it "between 70 and 66 BCE."³ As such questions are of great interest to historians immersed in the study of late Western Han, Yang Yun's dates and the details of his life and worldview merit further consideration.

Yang Yun's Life: A Summary

Yang Yun's maternal grandfather was the finest historian that China has ever produced: Sima Qian, author of the monumental history entitled *Shiji* (usually translated as *Records of the Historian*). An official whose career ended in execution, Yang is now chiefly remembered for having played an enormous (if unspecified) part in bringing that history into prominence, though Yang boasts a string of titles before his disgrace. Whether Yang in any way altered Sima Qian's text during the process is not known. We do know, however, that Yang and his maternal grandfather held similar views on certain historical matters and that at least some aspects of their worldviews coincided.

Yang Yun was nominated as Palace Guard (Lang)⁴ circa 73 BCE, serving in the guard at Xuandi's court (r. 74–48 BCE). Classically trained, Yang enjoyed close relations with a group of distinguished men of letters. His real break came in 66 BCE, when he was apprised of a possible plot against the emperor by a junior member of the family of Huo Guang. Yang provided the emperor a full account of what he knew, the plot was foiled, and Yang was duly awarded with his own noble title, as Noble of Pingtong (Pingtong Hou, the Noble Who Ensures Peace by Informing).⁵ He was also concurrently promoted to be Leader of the Palace Guards.⁶ In the latter capacity, Yang eliminated a number of corrupt financial practices. As a result, in 61 BCE he was promoted to ministerial rank as Commissioner of the Palace. In this post, Yang was dispatched, circa 57 BCE, to inquire about Imperial Counsellor Xiao Wangzhi's views regarding Xiongnu policy, and sometime later Yang was one of the senior officials sent to interrogate Xiao about criminal charges. With Xiao Wangzhi, as well as with others, Yang Yun was quick to criticize. As a result, he incurred considerable enmity at court—which led to a nasty quarrel with Dai Changle, who had joined Yang in Xiao's interrogation. Dai accused Yang of several crimes, the most serious being making derogatory comments about Xuandi and his chief ministers. Yang was arrested, though how long he remained in jail we do not know. After a lengthy investigation, Xuandi refused the suggestion that Yang Yun be executed. Instead he dismissed both Yang and Dai from office and demoted both to the rank of commoners.

Head unbowed by this near brush with death, Yang Yun took to a life of ease, where he flaunted his money, thereby provoking protests from his erstwhile friend Sun Hui-zong and his nephew Yang Tan, who advised him to keep a very low profile, such that he might eventually achieve restoration of his ministerial rank. Yang's seeming lack of contrition, his friend and nephew argued, might well anger the court. A number of people at the court were indeed highly irritated, and following a solar eclipse (undated, but more likely the one reported for 54 BCE than for 57 BCE) they even suggested that Yang's behavior had elicited this highly inauspicious event. Forthwith, the emperor ordered a second set of interrogations, after which Yang was convicted of high treason. He received the most severe form of punishment, a form that Xuandi by law and custom had to approve personally: execution by cutting in two at the waist. All of Yang's family was then exiled to the far northwestern frontier.⁷

Remaining Questions about Yang Yun's Career, to 66 BCE

According to Ban Gu, Yang Yun (polite name Ziyu) became a Palace Guard after being sponsored by his elder brother Yang Zhong. When a vacancy opened, Yang was enlisted as a Regular Mounted Attendant, one of several ways in which the loose responsibilities attached to the Palace Guard's post could be given greater definition.⁸ Earlier, in 74 BCE (sometime after September 19), Yang's father, Yang Chang, had died while holding the post of Chancellor, the highest-ranking administrator in the Western Han bureau-

cracy. Upon Chang's death, Yang Zhong as elder son, inherited his father's title, Noble of Anping. Then, in early spring of 73 BCE, in recognition of Yang Chang's signal contribution to Xuandi's enthronement, Xuandi's court added the income from 3,500 households to the entitlements that already accrued to Yang Zhong's noble rank.

According to a letter Yang Yun wrote to a friend (comp. 54 BCE), it was his father's merit and not his brother's sponsorship (which he fails to mention) that allowed him to attain the post of Palace Guard: "I was fortunate enough, thanks to inheriting my late father's achievements, to be able to be taken on in the staff of bodyguards on duty in the palace."⁹ In the light of this passage, Yang Yun's career could not have begun before February or March of 73 BCE, when Xuandi decided to honor Yang Chang posthumously by bestowing favors on Chang's heir. And if Yang Yun and his elder brother faithfully observed the three years' mourning period for their father (an observance not yet common during Western Han), Yun's career could not have begun much before 71 BCE.¹⁰ A rather short but dramatic life lay ahead of him.

Ban Gu's biography of Yang Yun alleges that Yang possessed all the talents necessary for a brilliant career. Yang was among the first to carefully read the history written by his maternal grandfather, Sima Qian, and to promote its transmission and wider circulation. He was also a connoisseur of the *Chunqiu* (*Annals*) classic. In addition, his friendly relations with outstanding classicists and Confucians won him great renown at the imperial court.¹¹ Sometime before August–September 66 BCE, Yang was promoted to the post of Bureau Head of the Left in the ministry of the Commissioner of the Palace, a supernumerary office that increased his annual salary by 2,000 bushels of grain, even though his regular office seems to have stayed the same.¹² Until the fall of 66 BCE, this supernumerary position as Bureau Head of the Left remained the chief adornment of Yang's official career, for a brief account of his service to the throne says that in 66 BCE Yang held the post of Bureau Head of the Left of the Palace Guards.¹³ The title "Palace Guard" was given to court officials appointed to the three units of the imperial bodyguards; the post "enrolled certain categories of candidates for office, who underwent a probationary period in the capital" at the salary and rank equivalent to 600 bushels, in contrast to other, lesser Lang who ranked at either 400 or 300 bushels.¹⁴ Most probably Palace Guard is the only post that Yang Yun held throughout the first part of his career, as Ban Gu does not mention career advances for Yang until his promotion to ministerial rank. Hence, all offices and titles held by Yang Yun until 66 BCE point to one and the same ministry, that of the Commissioner of the Palace,¹⁵ where Yang's entire official career was carved out.

Leader of the Palace Guards, 66–61 BCE

The events of August–September 66 BCE accelerated Yang Yun's career, for it was then that Yang learned of a plot to dethrone Xuandi, devised by members of the clan of the recently deceased regent Huo Guang. Hearing the rumors, Yang turned to Jin Anshang,

also in the ministry of the Commissioner of the Palace and probably Yang's chief;¹⁶ certainly, it was through Jin that Yang alerted the emperor to the existence of the plot. Yang was summoned to an imperial audience, at which he recounted the circumstances as he knew them. After the rebels were executed, in early fall, 66 BCE, Yang and four others who had revealed the plot were awarded noble rank.¹⁷ Yang Yun became Noble of Pingtong, with the income from 2,500 households.¹⁸ Some years later, he was promoted to Leader of the Palace Guards in the same ministry, a post he held for about five years.

Yang Yun undertook several reforms to improve morale among his staff, reforms that he probably deemed consistent with Gaozu's policies toward the bureaucracy generally and the palace bureaucracy in particular. Until Yang's reforms, the court officials who happened to be rich had far more freedom than staff members who were poor, for no palace official was granted permission to leave the palace unless he was able to use personal funds to pay for the official documents required. Those who could afford such fees were nicknamed Court Officials with Riches Piled Up (Shan Lang; lit., Court Officials with Riches or Resources like Those in Mountains). In theory, each palace official was entitled to return home on leave from the palace once every five days (called a "hair washing day"), so that he might rest, bathe, and "wash his hair," but if he fell ill while in service, he had to apply for a day's sick leave, which would be compensated for with one less hair washing day. As a result of this regulation, some of the poorer men on his staff supposedly could not afford "to take a single day off in more than a year." Meanwhile, wealthier staff members could afford all the necessary documentation to obtain a vacation, and they exited the palace day after day to amuse themselves, while also resorting to bribery to obtain better appointments within the palace.¹⁹

As Leader of the Palace Guards, Yang Yun stopped using the services of the so-called Court Officials with Riches Piled Up, and possibly he even dismissed them (the Chinese is unclear). He forwarded an annual budget for his department to the Commissioner of Agriculture (Da Sinong), who duly provided Yang with the necessary funding to allow the poorer men on his staff to be on a par with the richer.²⁰

As to their [the staff's] sick leaves, leaves for rest and for visiting their families, as well as the holidays for bathing and washing hair, Yang Yun busied himself with all such tasks, according to the legal ordinances. When a Palace Guard or an Imperial Messenger [Yezhe]²¹ committed a crime, Yun would immediately issue a report calling for his dismissal; at the same time, Yun recommended for promotion those of the better type: that is, those among his staff members who combined virtuous conduct with excellent abilities, so that some of them reached the posts of commandery governors or one of the Nine Ministers.²² Owing to this, the Palace Guards on his staff underwent a profound transformation, with all, without exception, encouraged to do their best to nip in the bud such bad habits as requesting an audience [to pursue their selfish aims] and bribing. As a result, orders were carried out and the prohibitions stopped

crime,²³ for all the palace staff were united [in making an effort]. For that reason, Yun was promoted to the post of Commissioner of the Palace, with the additional supernumerary office of Inspector of Officials [Zhuli].²⁴

Commissioner of the Palace, 61–56 BCE

With his promotion to Commissioner of the Palace in 61 BCE, Yang Yun ranked among the Nine Ministers, a mere five years after he had revealed the Huo-clan plot and become Leader of the Palace Guards.²⁵ Within the space of ten to thirteen years at most, Yang had risen from the humble post of Palace Guard to that of a ministry head, in which he “gained intimacy with and became close to the emperor, while supervising administrative matters.”²⁶ However, Yang never achieved a higher rank in his career, and relatively little is known about his activities in his ministerial post. We can, however, clarify his activities during the Wufeng reign period (57–54 BCE), when he interacted with Imperial Counsellor Xiao Wangzhi to devise a strategy for dealing with the Xiongnu at the very time when the Xiongnu were said to be “in a state of internal disension.”²⁷ These interactions, indeed, were at the heart of Dai Changle’s denunciation of Yang Yun’s crimes in 56 BCE.

Here is the background: In 57 BCE, the Xiongnu realm was split into five contending domains, each led by a single would-be pretender claiming to lead the entire confederation.²⁸ At that point, Xiao Wangzhi had held the post of the Imperial Counsellor—a post second only to the Chancellor—for more than two years, since the summer of 59 BCE. He was a great man of letters who would later suggest the *jimi* policy by which the Xiongnu “were to be led like a horse or an ox by a halter.”²⁹ Xiao’s response to the court proposal to attack the Xiongnu is consistent with his later *jimi* proposals,³⁰ in that Xiao both times urged the throne to maintain peaceful relations with the Xiongnu. He reminded the court that the former Xiongnu leader (Chanyu), when murdered by a traitorous minister, had been about to conclude a formal peace treaty with the Han throne by which he would have acknowledged himself to be a “younger brother” of the Han emperor. Xiao reasoned that the Xiongnu leader’s successor, if prompted, might be inclined to do the same: “Any contender for the position of Chanyu, upon receiving great favor [from the Han] would surely acknowledge himself a Han subject and submit to us, once he was finally able to recover his throne, and this would mean an abundance of the imperial power and authority (*de*).”³¹

Xiao’s pretender to the throne is not named, but, judging from the context, Xiao referred to the person later known as the Huhanye Chanyu. Ban Gu remarks that Xuandi accepted Xiao’s advice, so some time later he dispatched troops to aid the Huhanye Chanyu’s efforts in pacifying his territory.³² Huhanye was duly enthroned in 59 or 58 BCE, but the very next year he found himself struggling with the other four Xiongnu leaders. This would seem to indicate the year(s) when Xiao Wangzhi advised the emperor to help Huhanye recover his father’s position as leader of all the Xiongnu

groups. Xun Yue (148–209 CE) speaks of 57 BCE as a time when the five Xiongnu leaders were still struggling, so that would date Xiao Wangzhi's advice to the same year.³³

It was therefore likely that at this very juncture, in 57 BCE, Yang Yun was sent to ask Xiao Wangzhi if it would be expedient "to exploit the situation by launching an attack."³⁴ As Commissioner of the Palace, Yang had shown a definite interest in Han-Xiongnu relations, so it may be that he was sent to seek Xiao's advice because he was seen as an expert in foreign affairs.³⁵ We know that Yang reported Xiao's "strong opposition to any such action"; also that later, having learnt that the Chanyu expressed his wish to visit the Han court, Yang skeptically remarked "Maodun Chanyu received delicate foods and beautiful objects from the Han, he denounced them as stinking and ugly. It is perfectly clear that the Chanyu will not come [to court]."³⁶ Obviously, Yang did not share Xiao's optimism that his emperor would be able to attract the Xiongnu leader and win his submission peacefully, by means of the emperor's civilizing charismatic model. Perhaps Yang preferred the plan to attack the Xiongnu?

Dai Changle was part of the group that visited Xiao Wangzhi in 57 BCE. In 56 BCE, Dai Changle denounced Yang Yun, and exploited Yang's skepticism regarding the Chanyu's visit in his denunciation. He construed Yang's remark on the Chanyu's visit as proof of Yang's treasonous intent: by stating that the Chanyu would not come on a court visit, Yang would have implied that the Chanyu had no intention of acknowledging himself a Han subject. This, in turn, could be taken as a hint on Yang's part that the reigning Han emperor's power and authority (*de*) were insufficient to attract new subjects.

Another accusation in Dai Changle's denunciation of Yang Yun also concerns the Xiongnu. Supposedly, after Yang heard that a Chanyu had been killed, he remarked,

If officials of great worth make good plans for an unworthy sovereign, who fails to put them into practice, the sovereign will condemn himself to inescapable ruin, just as in Qin times, when its emperors appointed only unworthy officials, while putting to death the loyal and good, with the result that Qin was finally annihilated. If only the Qin emperor had been on intimate terms with their officials of great worth, and appointed them to posts, that dynasty would have reigned all the way up to now. Evildoers in the past and present times are alike: they are badgers from the same mound.³⁷

Not surprisingly, this aside was interpreted as a criticism not only of the Xiongnu but also of the Central States' rule. According to Dai: "Yun groundlessly quoted the example of a perished state in order to speak evil of and to criticize the present age; he failed to observe rites proper to a loyal subject."³⁸

Yang Yun visited Xiao Wangzhi two more times: first, when he interrogated Xiao to ascertain whether Xiao had slandered the Chancellor and the imperial administration; and second, when he sought to have Xiao demoted from the post of Imperial

Counsellor to that of Senior Tutor to the Heir Apparent. Yang appears to readers as a minister entrusted by the emperor to delicately inquire into the relations between the two highest-ranking officials (specifically, the behavior of the Imperial Counsellor toward his superior), and to carry out the imperial order to demote the Imperial Counsellor.³⁹ The demotion of Xiao Wangzhi took place sometime between the summer of 57 BCE and the summer of the following year after which time Huang Ba succeeded him as Imperial Counsellor.⁴⁰ Xiao Wangzhi's *Hanshu* biography mentions these two additional visits of Yang Yun to Xiao in the context of Geng Shouchang's memorial, submitted in 54 BCE, to establish an "Ever-Normal" or "Ever-Level Granary," designed to foster price supports and price caps on grain, the most basic commodity of the Han farming economy.⁴¹ However, these visits cannot possibly have taken place after the submission of Geng Shouchang's memorial, for that was a year and a half after Xiao Wangzhi was no longer Imperial Counsellor. Here, at the very least, we have a seeming contradiction in what the *Hanshu* says about Yang Yun.⁴²

In moving against Xiao Wangzhi, Yang Yun clearly carried out the imperial will; at the same time, we cannot discount the possibility that Yang also held a personal grudge against Xiao and wanted to get even with him. Yang Yun's close friend Han Yanshou was at the same time battling Xiao Wangzhi, with Han and Xiao making charges and countercharges, accusing each other of financial malfeasance. As it happens, Han Yanshou eventually lost this struggle, at which point he was imprisoned and temporarily rescued by Yang Yun before finally being publicly executed in 56 BCE.⁴³ Did, then, Yang Yun belong to a clique vying for power at the imperial court? Later, after Yang's execution, with his friends and relatives still under a cloud, we are told that the Excellencies and Ministers (Gongqing) memorialized the throne by alleging the existence of such a faction.⁴⁴ It is difficult to say whether this allegation is true, but Yang himself talked of his friends as those "of the same kind" (*tonglei*) whose mutual sympathies made for mutual attractions and, presumably, mutual aid in times of trouble. Yang further described his circle engaging in a joint struggle against those "of a different kind" (*yi lei*, meaning "a common enemy").⁴⁵ As early as 60 BCE, one of the group's members, Yang's friend Ge Kuanrao, was forced to commit suicide because of his critical attitude toward other officials. The *Hanshu* reports that "the great ministers Yang Yun, Ge Kuanrao, and others were executed, owing to their having committed crimes [consisting of] biting satirical utterances."⁴⁶

Personality

To arrive at an informed opinion of Yang Yun's personality, we must turn to his first biographer, Ban Gu. Ban's sketch is not of a simple character treated in a one-sided manner. Ban wrote no formal "appraisal" of the man, but rather included his opinion of Yang Yun in the biography itself:

First Yang Yun received five million copper cash as [his portion of] the wealth inherited from his father. When he himself was enfeoffed as a noble, he distributed all of it among [the members of his] clan. His stepmother had no sons, and her wealth also amounted to several million cash. When she died, she left all she had to Yang, and Yang redistributed all of it among his stepmother's elder and younger brothers. He twice received property [as an inheritance] amounting to more than ten million cash and distributed all of it to others. His scorn for wealth and love of righteous conduct were like that. When Yang resided in the palace, he showed himself to be an incorrupt and pure person, without bias or favoritism. Court officials praised his impartiality and justice.⁴⁷

However, Yang Yun boasted of his worthy conduct and administrative abilities. He was moreover ruthless by nature and he liked to expose the secret misdeeds of others: "If someone of equal rank opposed him, Yang was sure to want to return the harm, and he outdid others because of his abilities. Therefore he 'was much murmured against' at the court. He and the Commissioner of Transport Dai Changle broke off relations with one another, and eventually that was the reason Yang perished."⁴⁸

Denounced and Demoted

As readers will recall, the earliest official contacts between Yang Yun and Dai Changle can be traced to their "visit" to interrogate Xiao Wangzhi in 57 BCE.⁴⁹ Another item in Dai's denunciation of Yang Yun points to additional, more private meetings between Yang and Dai. In his denunciation, Dai reported that Yang had once said to him, "Since the first month, the sky has been overcast, yet we have had no rain. This sort of phenomenon, recorded in the *Annals*, was first explicated by the honorable Xiahou. The emperor may go out on his travels, but surely he will *not* reach Hedong Commandery [so he will not be able to sacrifice, as the ritual norms dictate, to the God of the Soil there]."⁵⁰ The date of this passage is unclear; the events described might have occurred early in 56 BCE. Dai deemed Yang's prediction that Xuandi would *not* reach Hedong "especially refractory and contrary to the principles [laid down by Heaven]," because it implied that the emperor would have spoken in jest.⁵¹ That Dai Changle, in his denunciation of Yang in 56 BCE, is able to draw upon their former private conversations implies that Yang was somewhat careless when he spoke in private, in that he failed to take the possible consequences of his words into consideration.

In 56 BCE Dai Changle himself was denounced for boasting that he "replaced the emperor in performing the rites [in the ancestral temple], while the Noble of Du [i.e., Jin Shang] drove the imperial carriage."⁵² Such boasting was prohibited, as "saying things that are unfit to say" (speaking of palace affairs) was deemed a crime "affecting the imperial person," even if this crime was not serious enough to qualify as *dani bu/wudao* (treasonous or impious activity, or lèse majesté).⁵³ It was a grave accusation,

certainly. Dai Changle, suspecting that Yang Yun was behind his own problems, turned around and promptly denounced Yang. Dai's denunciation records six utterances about the emperor or his officials ascribed to Yang, mostly made in private conversations but at least once in the presence of a group of dignitaries. Dai then appended his own comments to half of the utterances.

In discussing Yang's meetings with Xiao Wangzhi and Dai Changle, we have already seen several of Yang's utterances found in Dai's denunciation: Yang Yun's snide remark about a court visit by the Chanyu; Yang's careless comparison between the short-lived Qin dynasty and the reigning emperor, which made him liable to charges of disloyalty; and Yang's prediction that the emperor would not reach Hedong.

According to Dai's remaining charges, when the carriage of a noble went rushing at full speed into the northern side gate of the palace, Yang Yun said to Zhang Yanshou, "I have heard it said that when an earlier chariot going at full speed ran into the palace gate, breaking the bar of the gate and killing the horses, then Zhaodi passed away. Now it again happened, by Heaven's ordinance (*tian shi*), rather than by human effort."⁵⁴ This early utterance evidently took place during a three-way conversation between Yang, Zhang Yanshou, and Dai Changle, who met perhaps to try to resolve a source of "discord" between them.⁵⁵ Such words merited the most severe punishment, the extermination of Yang's entire clan, according to Dai, since they implied the death of the reigning emperor. In another case, Dai Changle alleged that Yang submitted a memorial to the throne recommending that the Metropolitan Commissioner of the Left Han Yanshou be cleared of a false charge, though Han's conduct had besmirched the reputation of the throne.⁵⁶ According to the same source, "when Yun was looking up at portraits painted on the wall of the Western Pavilion, he pointed to the portraits of wicked kings of distant antiquity and said, 'When the Son of Heaven was passing by here, he asked about their faults in detail, so he could take them as his 'models.'"⁵⁷ Dai observed that the portraits painted on the wall included those of paragons of kingly authority, yet Yang said nothing about them.

The Commissioner of Trials Yu Dingguo was told to take charge of investigating Yang Yun's case; he questioned witnesses, for instance, a general in charge of the guards of the palace gates, and found that "the proof [of felonious or even treasonous intent] was clear."⁵⁷ Yang tried to pass a message through his subordinate to warn his in-law Zhang Yanshou to deny Yang's utterance that had implied Xuandi's impending death. The subordinate refused, and the whole story was revealed to Yu Dingguo. The latter reported to the throne that Yang refused to admit his guilt; worse, he had attempted to suborn a valuable witness. In sum, Yu reported, "Yang Yun was fortunate enough to be able to occupy his place in the rank of Nine Ministers [and the concurrent supernumerary post of] Inspector of the Officials. As a minister near the emperor who was head of the palace bodyguards, he was trusted by the emperor and he participated in discussing policy matters." Despite the favor shown him, he failed to devote himself entirely to the emperor's well-being; instead, he "cherished a grudge, he adduced the example of

a perished state [Qin], and he uttered portentous and evil words,” all of which “added up to treason.” As the emperor could not bear to inflict capital punishments upon two ministers near to him, he issued an edict that simply demoted both Yang Yun and Dai Changle to commoners.”⁵⁸

The Date of Yang Yun’s Demotion and Execution

Different entries in various *Hanshu* tables have generated considerable confusion regarding the date of Yang Yun’s demotion and eventual execution. The *Hanshu*’s “Table of Officers and Ministers” states that Yang Yun became minister in 61 or early 60 BCE and was demoted “five years later,” which would be 56 or early 55 BCE.⁵⁹ This is corroborated by an entry in the *Hanshu*’s *Basic Annals* for Xuandi’s reign, which notes Yang Yun’s demotion from minister to commoner in the second year of the Wufeng reign period, in January or February 55 BCE.⁶⁰ However, according to an entry in the *Hanshu*’s “Table of Meritorious Subjects,” Yun became a noble in the fall of 66 BCE and lost his noble rank “after ten years” “in the third year of the Wufeng reign period,” in 54 BCE, or one year later than asserted by the entries in the other *Hanshu* chapters.⁶¹ According to one commentator, the confusion was due to a mistranscription of a single character: the “Table of Meritorious Subjects” should read the “second” instead of the “third” year.⁶² But does this mean that Yang’s execution took place in January or February 55 BCE, as most believe?⁶³

At least two Western scholars have opined that 55 BCE was simply when Yang Yun was deprived of his post and title, and not the date of his execution.⁶⁴ Indeed the *Basic Annals* and tables in the *Hanshu* state twice that in 55 BCE Yang was only dismissed and made a commoner, so his execution occurred later. Yang’s biography says the same thing. Yang was writing a letter to a friend after his demotion to a commoner’s rank, so more than a year had elapsed between the two events. All other evidence suggests the same, including Xun Yue’s biography of Yang, with its appended relevant documents: the indictment by Dai Changle, Yu Dingguo’s subsequent report to the throne, and the above-cited statement about the emperor’s leniency.⁶⁵ Clearly, then, neither Ban Gu nor Xun Yue, Yang’s first biographers, believed that Yang was executed early in 55 BCE.

Why, then, did Ban Gu in the *Basic Annals* date Yang Yun’s execution to the same year as his demotion? A historical event may develop slowly over a single year or even many years, which provides an annalist with several choices when devising his entry for the event. Judging from Ban Gu’s writings, an annalist’s choice of a specific date may reflect more than mere chronological considerations, including the subject of a given chapter, the biographer’s own ideological biases, and so on. In particular, the biographer may choose the date that permits him to illustrate best the character of the person portrayed; meanwhile, in supplying an account of an area where the person took policy initiatives, the biographer may prefer to date the same event differently, if that will allow him to provide a fuller account, including references to outcomes occurring

after the deaths of important persons. To put it differently, in one chapter of his work the biographer may choose a certain year to help the reader to better understand whose actions have led to the event or who is responsible for it, while in a second he may want to draw the reader's attention to the date when an event occurred.

An example would be Ban Gu giving two different dates for the loss of the Western Regions from the empire, 16 and 23 CE.⁶⁶ One scholar discovering this chronological discrepancy treated it simply as a matter of "correct" versus "incorrect,"⁶⁷ implying that Ban Gu was capable of falsifying facts; but this does not adequately explain why two different dates might be given. Ban Gu regarded the severance of relations between the Western Regions and the empire as a gradual process. The date 16 CE marked a decisive, though penultimate, stage of this retreat; Wang Mang's unfortunate punitive expedition to Central Asia lost a huge chunk of Han territory, but Wang Mang had already died by the time that the last warrior from the Central States left the Western Regions. Placing the blame for losses squarely on Wang Mang's shoulders in Wang's biography, Ban Gu wrote under 16 CE, "From this time on, the Western Regions severed [their relations with us]."⁶⁸ But when Ban compiled his account of the Western Regions, his attention was focused less on Wang Mang's role than on the actual date when relations between the Central States and the Western Regions were finally severed, and so he there supplied a later date, after Wang Mang had died.⁶⁹

The punishment of Yang Yun seems to present a similar case of Ban Gu employing different dates. One date is in the context of Xuandi's *Basic Annals*; the second appears in Yang's biography. Yang's punishment was a protracted process, since he was first dismissed and demoted to the status of a commoner and only later executed. Evidently in the *Basic Annals* of Xuandi, both Ban Gu and Xun Yue took the Wufeng period to be more important for the story of Yang Yun's punishment than the real date of his execution, presumably for at least two reasons: a date included by historiographers in the *Basic Annals* of an emperor took priority over personal dates with respect to Yang; also, the *Basic Annals* date draws attention to Xuandi's initial lenience toward Yang. Even Yang, in his supplicatory letter, seems to want to acknowledge the emperor's kindness, as he says, "I humbly deem the mercy of our sage ruler to be immeasurable."⁷⁰ Thus for Yang, the *Basic Annals* date marks the beginning of a series of punishments and not their lethal end; that is, the early date marks the point when Yang was given a chance to reform. That he failed to make the most of that opportunity puts the blame squarely on him for his subsequent execution.

But does this assignment of blame necessarily indicate that either Ban Biao, or his son Ban Gu, approved of Yang Yun's execution? That seems doubtful. Ban Biao in the opening passage of the *Basic Annals* of Yuandi, son of Xuandi, made no direct statement, it is true; but he did quote the future emperor's opinion, probably because he shared it. Supposedly the future Yuandi, when heir apparent, "was mild and humane, someone who liked Confucian scholars."⁷¹ He observed his father's reliance on officials well versed in the written laws and his belief in "comparing the performances of

officials with their bureaucratic titles” (*xingming*);⁷² Yuandi also noted that “the great ministers Yang Yun, Ge Kuanrao, and others were executed on charges that they had engaged in making biting satirical remarks.”⁷³ Hence, Xuandi’s heir apparent tried to persuade Xuandi that he was too severe in applying the laws and he should employ more classical masters in his administration, at which point the emperor grew apoplectic with rage and predicted, “It is you, my heir apparent, who will throw the dynasty into disorder!”⁷⁴ Most probably, Ban Biao and Ban Gu alike shared this view of Xuandi as overly harsh.

YANG YUN’S LETTER

The primary source for the main events that took place after Yang Yun’s initial arrest until his grisly death is a letter Yang wrote in response to his erstwhile friend Sun Hui-zong.⁷⁵ We can infer from the letter that Yang experienced a severe shock when he, his wife, and his children were imprisoned. He despaired that his entire clan would be “wiped out”; at the same time, he berated himself for not having conducted himself in a manner above reproach. The imperial mercy shown him after his first denunciation and investigation appears to have revived his spirits and his hopes, even if he realized that he had better adopt a new way of life. To use his own words,

”When the superior man follows the [correct] way, he rejoices in it, forgetting his sorrows thereby.”⁷⁶ And when the mean man preserves his body intact, he is so happy at the turn of events that he forgets his crimes. When I, Yun, ventured to think about myself, I realized that my fault was already so great and my conduct already so remiss that I should become a farmer for the rest of my life and die as such. For that reason I personally lead my wife and children, and they join⁷⁷ my efforts in plowing fields and planting mulberries, in watering orchards and kitchen gardens, in managing money-making ventures (*zhichan*), from which we pay in taxes to the state thereby.⁷⁸

Here we have a former noble who participates in cultivating the fields together with other members of his family and the servants and slaves at their disposal, a rare scene, given the usual focus of our sources on life at court. The phrase “managing money-making ventures” points to an important aspect of Yang Yun’s economic activities.⁷⁹ His letter states, “I, Yun, have been fortunate enough to have savings left over from my salary. Just now I am buying grain at low prices and selling it at high prices, ‘pursuing a one-tenth profit’ thereby.”⁸⁰ Similarly, Ban Gu writes in the lead-up to the letter, “After Yun had already lost his noble rank, he took up residence in his house and managed money-making ventures. He set to erecting buildings and he enjoyed his life, thanks to his wealth.”⁸¹ Yang Yun engaged in these activities even though more than a year after his demotion to commoner, his friend Sun had specifically warned him that, since

he had fallen from imperial grace, he should refrain from any money-making ventures, and also from “establishing friendly relations with guests [i.e., clients], accepting their praises.”⁸² Obviously, Yang became a very wealthy person, and he started behaving like a “noble man” who “forgets his sorrows” through “keeping in touch with acquaintances.”⁸³ Worse still, Yang combined two occupations simultaneously, that of farmer (the “basic” occupation) and that of merchant (the “secondary” occupation), though Han customs and classical learning disapproved of this.⁸⁴ Interestingly, Yang’s grandfather Sima Qian had been especially tolerant of money-makers—a fact for which many moralizers condemned him.⁸⁵ Perhaps not coincidentally, Yang Yun’s letter at several points recalls the portrait of one of the money-makers most praised by Sima Qian, namely Fan Li, who also styled himself as His Honor Zhu of Tao (Tao Zhu Gong).⁸⁶

Fan Li’s full story would take far too long to recount here, but after rising to become chief minister for King Goujian of Yue (r. 496–465 BCE), Fan abruptly abandoned his post in Yue, reasoning that no one in such a high position could manage to keep his head on his shoulders for long. Fan therefore went into hiding, lest he become too embroiled in dangerous court politics. Fan Li’s biography concludes with these words by Sima Qian:

Therefore Fan Li moved from one to the other of the three states by turns, making himself famous throughout the realm. It was not that he went away simply for no particular reason. In each place where he stopped, he was sure to make himself famous. Eventually he died of old age in Tao. Therefore the present age transmits his story, calling him His Honor Zhu of Tao.

The Taishi Gong says: “Could Goujian not be called a worthy? Very likely he possessed the achievements [the sage-ruler] Yü left to him. Fan Li left three states, one after another, and everywhere he enjoyed an excellent reputation. This reputation was handed down to subsequent generations in his family. When ruler and minister are like that [so ideal], even if [one of them] would wish not to let the other become so illustrious, could the one person prevent it?”⁸⁷

Shiji chapter 129 adds at least one detail of interest in the context of this chapter, though it discusses Fan Li, not as an adviser or general, but as a wealthy person out of office:

”When the granaries are full, people know the ritual rules; when clothing and food are adequate, people know the distinction between honor and shame,” they say. Rites are born of possessing [adequate] wealth and abandoned in times of want. Therefore when a superior man is rich, he delights in practicing his virtue; when a petty person is rich, he works merely in conformity with his strength. . . . In the course of nineteen years, Fan Li three times accumu-

lated wealth amounting to one thousand catties of gold, twice he distributed it among his poorer friends and distant relations. This is precisely what is meant by the phrase “the *junzi* delights in practicing virtue.”⁸⁸

Fan Li’s decision to retire from his official post to live the private life of a farmer and merchant is described in Han times as a “withdrawal from the world,” which makes it clear that Fan chose this sort of life himself, rather than being forced into it.⁸⁹ The tradition of eremitism has a long and distinguished history in early China, and it is featured in the *Lunyu* (*Analects*) ascribed to Confucius’s disciples and their disciples.⁹⁰ Yang Yun’s image in his *Hanshu* biography is reminiscent of those of “recluses” and unemployed men-in-service (*shi*) in antiquity. Comparing Yang’s and Fan’s biographies, the similarities and differences become clear: both men held high offices and afterward found themselves commoners, but Fan Li abandoned his official post of his own accord (a move later thought to be typical of Daoists),⁹¹ whereas Yang Yun was deprived of his post and title by the emperor as punishment.

As a translator remarks of Yang’s letter, it “is couched in terms of the elaborate humility required by Han epistolary etiquette.”⁹² While true, this does not mean that Yang’s self-appraisals did not reflect his attitudes toward the realities of his life. Yang briefly assesses his career as an official who “eventually proved to be inadequate to his tasks and finally met with misfortune.”⁹³ The adverb “eventually” seems especially meaningful here. Yang’s self-criticism is chiefly directed against his own conduct when he served as minister and noble, during the second half of the decade spanning 66–56 BCE. According to his letter, though his post and title provided him with many possibilities to be of use to the throne, he “was never capable at this time of submitting any proposals concerning state affairs” that would “spread abroad the transforming influence of the emperor’s civilizing power.” Yang moreover chastised himself for “proving incapable of . . . joining efforts with the crowd of other officials,” who were trying to “help the court.” By Yang’s own account, he “coveted salary and was greedy for power; he was incapable of retiring of his own accord.”⁹⁴ Yang’s biography remains silent on his activities and achievements during the ministerial period of his career, in contrast to the successes of his early career, and this indirectly corroborates the self-deprecating portrayal of Yang’s last five years in service. Neither had Yang the guts “to retire of his own accord.” These words show that he criticized himself from that point of view as well. He reproached himself for having been reduced to the status of a commoner by imperial decree, unlike Fan Li, who was above clinging to the powers invested in him by the ruler of the state.

The similarities between Yang Yun and Fan Li are also noteworthy: First, each began his new life as a commoner in farming, and each soon combined that life with mercantile activities. Second, both men undertook a course called “pursuing a one-tenth profit,”⁹⁵ which in Yang’s case probably means that he pursued only a modest profit margin (of 10 percent) on the total price he paid the farmers for their grain, as behooved a

superior person (*junzi*).⁹⁶ Third, both Yang and Fan each twice distributed their money among other people, though Fan did this after becoming a merchant; Yang, while still an official.

Ban Gu's appraisal of Yang Yun's generosity looks somewhat nearer to Confucian ideals than Sima Qian's appraisal of Fan Li's generosity. Moreover, the citations adduced in Yang Yun's letter are nearly all from texts celebrated by Confucians. But the fact remains that Fan Li's image seems to have been an object of emulation for Yang Yun, if we can assume, as I do, that Yang had the *Shiji* text before him, in his own family library.⁹⁷ And Ban Gu's account reads, "In Xuandi's time, Yang Yun, Noble of Pingtong, who was Sima Qian's grandson by his daughter, treated Sima Qian as his ancestor and followed (or transmitted) his writings (*zu shu qi shu*). Thereafter these writings circulated widely because of this."⁹⁸ Ergo it is quite possible that Ban's account describes Yang Yun as an ideological inheritor of his grandfather's ideas.

Scholars have blamed "the generally unfavorable attitude toward the class [of merchants] as a whole" for Yang Yun's self-disparaging tone in his letter.⁹⁹ True, Yang's letter does reflect the scorn for commerce that was widespread in Han society. But when Yang dubs his own commercial activities "the business of a sordid merchant, a shameful position (*wu ru zhi chu*) that he nonetheless personally engages in," he almost literally quotes from Sima Qian.¹⁰⁰ Thus Yang not only expressed no desire to restore his former status as noble and high-ranking official; he also put himself on the level with those exemplary rich merchants whom Sima Qian termed "untitled nobility" (*su feng*)¹⁰¹—those magnates and wealthy proprietors who derived their riches, not from their kingdoms and the taxes paid by their subject populations, but rather from managing their businesses in ways tailored to dramatically increase their property. We can therefore conclude that Yang rejected all advice that he should display his repentance and keep a low profile, if he hoped to persuade Xuandi to pardon him or even return him to high office.

Ban Gu writes, "More than a year [after Yang Yun's demotion], his friend the commandery Governor (Taishou) of Anding Sun Huizong,¹⁰² a native of Xihe, who was a man of exceptional cleverness and far-reaching schemes, wrote Yun a letter, in which he admonished him."¹⁰³ Sun Huizong told Yang Yun that after a great minister is deprived of his post, he should shut his door, in order to give others the impression¹⁰⁴ that he is shivering with fright because of his fault. That will garner him sympathy. Such a disgraced minister should not "engage in money-making ventures, establish friendly relations with guests and clients, or accept their praises"; after all, Yang was a Chancellor's son charged with "dishonest utterances" (*yanmei yuyan*)¹⁰⁵ who denied his guilt in his heart of hearts.¹⁰⁶ To Sun, Yang responded with his return letter, strongly disagreeing with Sun's ideas and emphasizing two points: First, Yang saw nothing shameful in his decision to remain a farmer to the end of his days,¹⁰⁷ so he had no intention to try to return to high office. Second, Yang had no intention of parading his repentance in order to arouse others' compassion.

On the second point, he writes that the sages proclaimed an end to the mourning period should come, even for a father or one's emperor, after "three years' time"; thus, "One can hardly bemoan the loss of a post for longer than that!"¹⁰⁸ Yang Yun continues with a passage that has become justly famous:

The work of a tiller is hard. When, in the course of the annual round of seasons, the days of the summer sacrifice (*fu*) or the New Year's festival (*la*)¹⁰⁹ come, I boil a sheep, roast a lamb, and reward myself for my toils with a dipper of fermented liquor. My family comes from Qin, and so I can perform Qin songs. My wife is a woman from Zhao, and so she is most skillful at playing the psaltery.¹¹⁰ I also have several male and female slaves who sing. After I have drunk the fermented liquor, my ears begin to burn, and I look up at heaven, tapping on¹¹¹ an earthenware drum [to beat the time], while singing "Woo! Woo!"¹¹²

A poem or song (*shi*) to match the occasion then follows:

I cultivate a field in those Southern Mountains,¹¹³
But the rank weeds remain unkempt.
I plant beans on a one *qing* patch of land,¹¹⁴
But they fall to the ground, leaving only bare stalks.
So long as a man is alive, he should just enjoy himself,
Till when has one to wait for wealth and high standing?

Yun continues: "On these days I shake my robes in delight, I wave my sleeves up and down, stamp my feet and break into a dance. I indulge in unrestrained amusements, certainly, but I do not know why this should be inadmissible."¹¹⁵

To Yang Yun's way of thinking, he is entitled to his innocent pleasures, if only because he was deprived of his post and title a long time before. Besides, Yang reasons, many abandoned him once he lost his post, joining with the crowd to defame him, "once they saw what direction the wind was blowing,"¹¹⁶ so why should he strive for a good reputation? Citing Master Dong (possibly Dong Zhongshu?) and Confucius himself, Yang firmly rejects Sun Huizong's advice.¹¹⁷

Yang plainly states that he and Sun Huizong are men of a "different kind" (*yi lei*), not only because they hold different social positions, but also because they cherish different ambitions and commitments and pursue their aims differently.¹¹⁸ These differences explain Yang's refusal to take Sun's advice, but Yang at the end of his letter cannot refrain from hinting just how low a person he takes Sun to be. He points out that the people of the barbarous Anding Commandery, to which Sun Huizong was recently posted, "are greedy and mean." Then he asks disingenuously, "Surely, you do not mean to say that local habits and customs can change the original nature of the people who

have moved there from outside? Now I clearly see your intentions, Sir!” Yang advises his erstwhile friend not to “talk much with one like him.”¹¹⁹

One final point to be resolved in connection with Yang Yun’s letter is its date: on the one hand, Ban Gu plainly states that Sun Huizong sent his letter to Yang “more than a year” after Yang’s demotion (i.e., 54 BCE); but on the other hand, Yang’s own letter refers to a time more than “three years” after his trial and demotion (i.e., at least into the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth month).¹²⁰ No more than twenty-one months can have elapsed between the time when Yang Yun still enjoyed the emperor’s trust (when conducting the investigation into Xiao Wangzhi’s conduct, in the summer of 56 BCE) and the time of Yang’s execution. Why would Yang take such literary license? We may never know, but we should acknowledge that Sun Huizong was not the only person to try to persuade Yang Yun to recover his ministerial rank.

Death

Yang Yun’s nephew Yang Tan was, in 54 BCE, Director of Dependent States (*Dian Shugu*).¹²¹ Yang Tan told Yun that another noble had been dismissed from his post, because of his offenses, but he was now invited by the court to become Imperial Counsellor:¹²² “My noble [uncle], your offense is light, and you moreover have merit. In future, you, too, will be again employed by the court.” To this Yun reportedly responded tartly, if we can believe the charges leveled against him, “What’s the use of having merit? The Son of Heaven is not worth exerting one’s every effort for!” Yang Tan, remembering the sorry fate of Yun’s old friends Ge Kuanrao and Han Yanshou, belatedly acknowledged that good men “exerting every effort [on the emperor’s behalf]” could still be executed.¹²³

This exchange of views, duly reported to the throne by an assistant to a groom, was then linked in an accusation to a solar eclipse, the direst of omens in the views of the time.¹²⁴ The date of the solar eclipse is known: May 9, 54 BCE.¹²⁵ The report by the groom’s assistant, forwarded to the Commissioner of Trials with the exchanges between Sun Huizong and Yang Yun, was considered sufficient proof of Yang’s failure to repent. The emperor was furious, and Yang was charged with high treason (*dani budao*), after which he was executed by being cut in two at the waist.¹²⁶ Yang Yun’s wife and children were banished to the far northwest commandery of Jiuquan. Because Yang Tan was judged to have failed to correct Yun by his admonitions, and to have come round to Yun’s own opinion,¹²⁷ he was himself dismissed from his post and made a commoner. The groom’s assistant was given a palace posting, but all those in important positions who had been on intimate terms with Yang Yun, “such as Commissioner of the Guards at the Weiyang Palace Wei Xuancheng, Governor of the Capital Zhang Chang, as well as Sun Huizong and others, were dismissed.”¹²⁸

Thus we know that Yang Yun’s execution took place after the solar eclipse of May 9, 54 BCE. Chu Shaosun testifies that in the fourth year of the Wufeng reign period (i.e., February/March 54 BCE to January/February 53 BCE), Yang “was cut in two at the

waist; and his state abolished.”¹²⁹ The date of Yang’s execution would then tally with the dates of his friends’ dismissals.¹³⁰ Judging from the sources at our disposal, Yang Yun was sentenced on the strength of repeated verbal offenses relating to the emperor and his rule. Perhaps most importantly, Yang seems to have died because he “cherished a grudge” against his ruler, despite his obligation to honor him.¹³¹

But Ban Gu’s testimony that Xuandi “hated” or “loathed” (*wu*) Yang Yun after reading his reply to Sun Huizong has prompted commentators over the centuries after Western Han to search for proof corroborating Ban’s story. This search has ended in two separate theories, the first adopted by commentators of the third century, the other championed by commentators of the Qing and early Republican eras. Both Zhang Yan (third century) and the third-century person who identifies himself as “your servant [i.e., subject] Can”¹³² evidently believed that Xuandi’s hatred and aversion were aroused by the inclusion of Yang Yun’s poem in the letter, since they believed the poem to be a coded allegory.

Zhang Yan mainly commented on separate characters or two-character phrases; only once does his analysis mention a phrase as long as four characters. “[Your] servant Can” operates with larger blocks of the text, couplets of eight characters each. Zhang Yan equates “high mountains” “situated in the south” with the symbol of the emperor. He thinks “rank weeds” implies a court in disarray. He reads “one *qing*” (or 100 *mu*) as alluding to the Hundred Officials at court. He makes the reference to “beans” mean “persons of truthfulness and uprightness,”¹³³ so that beans falling to the ground portend Yang Yun’s own dismissal, as well as the dismissal of those “of the same kind.” The commentator styling himself “your servant Can” takes the poem’s first two lines to mean that Yang “at the king’s court encountered disorder among the people.” Can thinks the second two lines mean, “I, Yun, planted beans on a patch of land measuring one *qing*, / But they fell to the ground and only bare stalks were left.” The passages, taken together, would then seem to imply that “although he, Yun, manifested all his loyalty and displayed all his probity in serving the emperor, he merely labored in vain, as he reaped no crops.”¹³⁴ Evidently, Yan Shigu (581–645 CE) shared Zhang Yan’s interpretation of the poem, since he included it in his *Hanshu* commentary.

The Qing scholar Zhou Shouchang (1814–1884 CE) offered a different interpretation, accusing Zhang Yan’s detailed commentary on Yang Yun’s poem of being an unjust accusation, which allowed Zhang to weave a legend designed to fill in blanks in the historical record:

Yan Shigu’s commentary accepted it [Zhang Yan’s account]. But I venture that the passages that caused Xuandi to “loathe” Yun were instead several expressions in the letter, which mention a sovereign, a father and “those who perform obsequies to the dead.” Probably Dai Changle’s earlier denunciation of Yun’s crimes had included a reference to Zhaodi’s death. Now Xuandi discovered a second reference of this type in his letter. Worse, Yun had remarked that “the

emperor was sure *not* to reach Hedong.” Reading over Yun’s letter, I assured myself once more of the real meaning behind Yun’s words. [The source of Xuandi’s hatred] has nothing to do with this poem of Yun’s.¹³⁵

Zhou’s reconstruction seems to have been the consensus since the seventeenth century, judging from the writings of Gu Yanwu (1613–1682 CE), Wang Xianqian (1842–1918 CE), and others.¹³⁶ The relevant section in the letter for these commentators is this: “Now, what human emotions fail to repress is that which sages do not prohibit. Therefore, although a sovereign is the most honored [of all people] and a father is the nearest, for those performing obsequies to the dead, there must come a time when the mourning period expires.”¹³⁷

In the minds of the Qing scholars, these words explained why Xuandi came to recall that Yang Yun had predicted his demise more than a year and a half earlier; also why the emperor came to regard this passage as an outrageous continuation of that same line of thought, even though it never mentions Xuandi or his predecessors but merely formulates a general rule about humans beings feeling grief.¹³⁸ In truth, Yang Yun’s letter had nothing to do with Xuandi personally, let alone with Yang’s predicting his death, so a more lenient emperor would have interpreted it otherwise. As to Yang’s utterance to the effect that the supreme ruler was sure “*not* to reach” Hedong Commandery, it behooves us to recall that this assertion originated from Dai Changle’s denunciation, not from Yang’s own letter.

Yang Yun’s Poem Revisited

This returns our attention to Yang Yun’s poem. Let us recapitulate what we know about it. It was sung in the traditional Qin manner by a man (i.e., Yang) acting as an informal choral leader, with Yang’s wife and a group of servants or slaves joining him in singing to the accompaniment of musical instruments. The instruments include those traditionally used by Qin people, such as earthenware drums and various clay vessels tapped by hand, also a zither or a lute of the Zhao type skillfully plucked by Yang’s wife. In their choral singing, rhythm seems crucial; there was tapping on and beating of earthenware drums, as well as striking of the thigh bones and shouting “Woo! Woo!” That such “performances” routinely took place at festivals, in turn, suggests the ritual provenance and character of such songs. The message of Yun’s song, that is, his call for enjoyment, seems to be consonant with the mood traditionally typical of *la* festivals. That the place name Southern Mountains appears in the first line of the poem forges yet another connection with the old Qin territory and traditions.¹³⁹

Yang Yun says of himself that he can perform the Qin-style traditional songs as he was of Qin origin and brought up in those traditions. But Yang was also the author of the song he sang (or at least he was regarded as such). His authorship is implied by the attempts of two commentators of the third century, by means of their allegorical

interpretations of this song, to answer why the emperor hated Yang and finally executed him. Formally, Yang's song included in his letter consists of four lines of four words or characters per line, with two concluding lines of five words or characters per line. The last words of the second, fourth, and sixth lines rhyme (*zhi* 治, *qi* 萋, and *shi* 時), being pronounced something like *d'iag*, *g'iag*, and *d'iag* in Archaic Chinese.¹⁴⁰

At least two important literary allusions appear in the poem. The first is the place name Southern Mountains (Nan Shan), which shows up repeatedly in the *Odes* classic and implies political critique of contemporary rule.¹⁴¹ The second allusion consists of the phrase meaning "weeds," "rank weeds," or "overgrown with weeds" (*wuwei*, *wuhui*), which repeatedly occurs in the poetry classic known as the *Chuci*, beginning with the opening *Lisao* poem. In the *Lisao*, the poet's persona, after describing what fragrant flowers he has planted, tells us his fond hopes of reaping the crop from the flowers at the proper time. He then ends the stanza with the defiant words, "Even if fragrant flowers grow withered and shed their petals, why should I be distressed? I grieve rather for the numerous fragrant flowers (*zhongfang*) overgrown with foul weeds."¹⁴² Earlier the same poem says, "The three sovereigns of old were pure and perfect, / It is around them indeed that numerous fragrant flowers had their proper place." The traditional commentary explains that the expression "numerous fragrant flowers" metaphorically points to "a crowd of worthies."¹⁴³ Thus in *Lisao* we definitely encounter the contrast between "fragrant flowers" and "rank weeds," symbolizing the opposition of worthy versus unworthy ministers at court.

Let us also not forget the image of beans, as explained by Zhang Yan's commentary: "Speaking of beans refers to persons of truthfulness and uprightness." This suffices, in my view, to show that Yang's song is plainly a political allegory. Hence the rhetorical question posed by the singer who confesses to have been the loser in the confrontation: "Till when has one to wait for wealth and high standing?" This shows that Yang Yun thought it hopeless to try to recover his official post at Xuandi's court, because his ruler lacked the capacity to appreciate Yang's merits at their true value. Yang's criticism was certainly aimed at the bad officials at the imperial court. When Yang said to his nephew, "The Son of Heaven is not worth exerting every effort for," this not only sounds like a bitter indictment of the emperor himself but also implies a harsh judgment of the men Xuandi employed, since the principle of mutual attraction meant a bad ruler attracts bad men. Hence Yang's words addressed to his nephew, "The Son of Heaven is not worth exerting every effort for."¹⁴⁴ This moreover explains the bitter tone that Yang adopted at his trial. One who read aloud the accusation hardly made those present perceive the original bitterness of Yang Yun's tone when the latter himself uttered this sentence. But no attentive listener could mistake the tone of Yang's dismissive appraisal of Xuandi's rule, irrespective of whether they accepted it or not.

So was the singing of the song indeed responsible for Yang Yun's execution? The last two lines contain the song's "message": that the singer's experience as a court official striving for reforms has shown it was all in vain. In his commingled anger and despair,

the singer declares that “so long as a man is alive, he should just enjoy himself!” The song’s ending thus justifies Yang’s new mode of life, which relies on an independent source of “wealth,” if not on “high standing.” Outwardly Yang seems to conform to the idea once formulated by Confucius, even if he employs the wording transmitted by Sima Qian: “If wealth and rank cannot be got anyway, I will follow what I like.”¹⁴⁵ That line leads us to a second legendary figure, who purportedly, like Fan Li, embodied the ideal to which Yang Yun alludes in his poem: Lu Zhonglian, who “being fond of out-of-the-way and extraordinary plans, was unwilling to take an official post,” lest it interfere with his lofty ideals.¹⁴⁶ Lu fled the court, after announcing that he “would rather be poor and humble, making light of the ways of the world and not bowing to the will of the local lords (*zhuhou*).”¹⁴⁷ For this reason, Sima Qian admired Lu Zhonglian, as the early twentieth-century commentator Takigawa Kametarō (1865–1932 CE) saw.¹⁴⁸

YANG YUN’S RECEPTION

Yang Yun’s ideals did not pass unnoticed by later Chinese poets in the first millennium CE, to say nothing of later ones, whether writing in *fu* or in poems of five words per line. Pan Yue’s (247–300 CE) “Panpipes” *fu* (*Sheng fu*) cites the fifth line of Yang Yun’s song, incorporating it in his own: “If so long as a man is alive, he fails to enjoy himself, then after his death, of what use will an empty posthumous name be?”¹⁴⁹ Similarly, Xie Tiao (404–499 CE) begins his poem “Wandering to the Eastern Fields” (“You dongtian”) with these lines: “When I am deep in sorrow and suffer from the lack of gaiety, / I take my friend by the hand and we enjoy ourselves together.” For Xie’s group, though, the preferred way of amusing themselves consists of going for a walk, climbing mountains, and contemplating the landscapes, rather than drinking with companions,¹⁵⁰ so as to experience a kind of aesthetic delight. Du Fu (712–770 CE) concludes one of his poems, “Staying the Night” (“Suxi”), with the words, “In the back palaces [i.e., the women’s quarters] they enjoy themselves in secret, / There are but few outsiders who know about it.” Clearly, his interpretation of Yang Yun’s phrase “enjoy oneself” (*xingle*) is “indulge in sexual pleasures.”¹⁵¹

Li Bo (701–762 CE), in the first of his four poems entitled “Under the Moon, Drinking Alone” (“Yuxia duzhuo”), turns his persona’s drinking in solitude into an imaginary scene of a drinking bout taking place with three personas, that of the author, the Moon, and his Shadow (imagery borrowed from the *Zhuangzi*):

Since the Moon does not know how to drink,
My Shadow merely follows the example of my person. . . .
Pleasurable activities and enjoyments (*xingle*) should occur in the spring
I sing, as the Moon slowly sails through the sky,
I dance, and my Shadow makes disorderly movements.¹⁵²

Talk of “enjoying oneself” alludes to the text of Yang Yun’s letter, as do the connotations of danger. That said, there are vague indications that the period of the year regarded as most fitting for *xingle* underwent a change after Han times. Yang Yun says in his letter that he usually drinks, sings, and dances at midsummer and New Year festivals,¹⁵³ whereas Li Bo celebrates spring, as does Xie Tiao, with his “fragrant spring.”

Conclusion

While it is difficult—very difficult—to determine the precise significance of the life and writings of Yang Yun, we sense that significance not merely from his actions, particularly his elevation of his grandfather’s masterwork, the *Shiji*, but also from the many fine post-Han poets who alluded to Yang Yun, dallying with his sense of enjoyments, as a pretext to broach the larger imponderables relating destiny to character. Admittedly, Yang Yun’s biography is replete with conundrums. Though he outwardly disdained wealth and rank, he deployed both to great effect, until such time as his bold plays infuriated the emperor he had once loyally served. And while he did not fear the hardships of rustic life, he had also been a consummate court insider. Small wonder then that two thousand years after his untimely death, scholars continue to circle round the questions attached to his life and writings.

Notes

- 1 I dedicate this chapter to the memory of Dorothée Kehren, who inspired me to work on Yang Yun and who, unfortunately, passed away before our joint work on Yang Yun was completed. For an earlier version of my chapter on Yang Yun, see Kroll 2010; *Biographical Dictionary*, 640–41. Yang Yun’s biography is appended to that of his father, Yang Chang, and a brief note on his elder brother, Yang Zhong; see *Hanshu* 66.2889–98 and *Hanshu buzhu* 66.8b–13a.
- 2 *Biographical Dictionary*, 640–41. But see *ibid.*, 498, 580, for mention of 54 BCE as the year of Yang Yun’s trial and that year or the next as the date of his execution.
- 3 See Hulsewé 1990, 212, 213; cf. Hulsewé 1955, 75, 175 (case no. 4), 274 (case no. 8). Hulsewé remarks, “I have omitted the reasoning by which I arrived at establishing these approximate dates,” while putting Yang’s execution “shortly after the solar eclipse of 9 May 54 BC.”
- 4 Editors’ note: Elsewhere in this volume, Lang is translated as “Courtier,” but Kroll believes that this does not capture how this title was applied in Yang Yun’s case, given that Yang was active in providing security services to the palace and the emperor. The title is difficult to translate, as its holders were assigned many different tasks; this is why many earlier scholars preferred the rather vague “Gentleman.”
- 5 See n. 18 below.
- 6 Editors’ note: The term “Zhonglang Jiang” is translated in Loewe’s *Biographical Dictionary* as “Leader of the Gentlemen of the Palace.” “Leader of the Palace Guards” is Kroll’s translation, which tries to capture the fact that the Zhonglang (Courtiers of the Palace) were Palace Guards. They did not fulfill the administrative or consultative duties often given to other Courtiers of the Palace.

- 7 The foregoing draws heavily upon the biography of Yang Yun in *Hanshu*, chap. 66; also upon *Biographical Dictionary*, 640–41.
- 8 *Hanshu* 8.239–40, 66.2889. Cf. Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 205, 207–8, citing *Hanshu* 18.1046, 19A.727. Bielenstein 1980, 7–8, 24, 50, describes the post of Regular Mounted Attendant as an “additional supernumerary title” (p. 50). A modern note to Yang Yun’s *Hanshu* biography identifies Changshi Ji as an additional supernumerary office for Palace Guards. See Zhang and Ren 1988, 159n2, 168. Chu Shaosun’s (104?–30? BCE), in describing Yang Yun’s service, calls him “Palace Guards [concurrently holding the supernumerary office of] a Regular Mounted Attendant.” See Takigawa 1955, 20.46. This seems to be one more proof that Changshi Ji should be regarded as an additional supernumerary office or title of a Palace Guard. However, neither Lü Zongli 1994, 251, 741, nor Loewe’s *Biographical Dictionary*, 640, mentions this supernumerary office.
- 9 *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 10 As to the beginning of Yang Yun’s career, his letter to his friend (comp. 54 BCE) testifies to Yang’s respect for the custom of three years (in reality of twenty-five months) of mourning for one’s father; see *Hanshu* 2895–6 and Watson 1962, 118n9.
- 11 *Hanshu* 66.2889, 62.2733; cf. Watson 1958, 67. Elsewhere Ban Gu says that Yang Yun won renown at the court while still a young man (*Hanshu* 66.2894). Probably, his life came to an end around the age of forty, which means he was born circa 90 BCE.
- 12 *Hanshu* 66.2889. This bureau post was held by Yang Yun concurrently with his original one; as Loewe puts it, an honorary title was granted to him. See *Biographical Dictionary*, 640.
- 13 *Hanshu* 17.671. The table in which this note is found was compiled by Ban Gu, Ban Zhao (48–116 CE), or Ma Xu (fl. ca. 100–133 CE).
- 14 Bielenstein 1980, 23–25. (Bielenstein’s translation of Zhonglang is “Gentlemen-of-the-Household.”)
- 15 *Hanshu* 66.2289 (cf. 45.3644, 45.3649), 19A.727. For the Guangluxun ministry and staff, see Bielenstein 1980, 23–26, 31, 251; *Biographical Dictionary*, 640, 765, 764.
- 16 Jin Anshan was a Leader of the Palace Guards (Zhonglang Jiang) who concurrently held the additional supernumerary office of Palace Attendant (Shizhong). *Hanshu* 17.671 (cf. 17.670), 66.2889. For Jin Anshan and his offices, see also Lü Zongli 1994, 145, 519; *Biographical Dictionary*, 195, 640, 762, 764; Bielenstein 1980, 24, 50, 59, 60, 245.
- 17 The Huo clan met its downfall in September–October, 66 BCE.
- 18 *Hanshu* 17.671, 66.2889, 68.2957. I owe the translation of Yang Yun’s noble title to Michael Nylan, who was the first to notice that it held meaning. When in 1 CE the same noble rank was awarded to Liu Dan, as a grandson of one of the kings, the significance of the name, and its association with Yang Yun, was probably forgotten; see *Hanshu* 15B.510. Chu Shaosun gives a different number of households (2,000); see *Shiji* 20.1066. Yang Yun held the fief for only ten years, five after his ennoblement in 66 BCE, and five more when in 61–56 BCE he served as Commissioner of the Palace.
- 19 *Hanshu* 66.2890.
- 20 *Hanshu* 66.2890, citing Yan Shigu; cf. *Hanshu buzhu* 66.9a. For “a day for rest and for washing the hair” during Han, see Lien-sheng Yang 1955, 302–4. For the post of Da Sinong, see Bielenstein 1980, 11, 18, 43–47, 54, 55, 67–69, 83, 94–95, 145.
- 21 For Yezhe, see Bielenstein 1980, 23, 26, 30; *Biographical Dictionary*, 763.
- 22 For governors of commanderies, see Bielenstein 1980, 93. For the Nine Ministers, see *ibid.*, 17–69.
- 23 A set phrase appearing in the *Guanzi*. See *Guanzi tongshi*, vol. 2, 67.413; the translation (slightly modified) comes from Rickett 1985–98, chaps. 12, 25.24, 86.160. See also *Huainanzi* (*Sibu beiyao*) 20.25; *Hanshu* 49.2995, 72.3077.
- 24 *Hanshu* 66.2890. For Zhuli, see Bielenstein 1980, 50; *Biographical Dictionary*, 640, 765.

- 25 *Hanshu* 19B.807; *Biographical Dictionary*, 640.
- 26 *Hanshu* 19B.807, 66.2890.
- 27 *Biographical Dictionary*, 640.
- 28 *Hanshu* 94B.3795–6; Taskin 1973, 33; *CHOC*, 393–94.
- 29 For Xiao Wangzhi, see *Hanshu* 78.3271–92. Cf. Watson 1974, 198–221; *Biographical Dictionary*, 606–8. For *jimi*, see Lien-sheng Yang 1968, 31–33; Kroll 1996. For Yushi Dafu (Imperial Counsellor), see Bielenstein 1980, 8–10.
- 30 See *Hanshu* 78.3271–92.
- 31 *Hanshu* 78.3279–80.
- 32 *Hanshu* 78.3279–80; cf. Watson 1974, 209–10. NB: Huhanye's father died in 60 BCE, before he received word from the Han court about his application to undertake a peace treaty. At that point, the future Huhanye Chanyu had to flee, when the Chanyu throne was seized by a pretender who also tried to make a marriage alliance (*heqin*) peace treaty with Western Han but was ousted in 58 BCE by members of his own group for his cruelty.
- 33 *Hanshu* 94A.5352–53; cf. Taskin 1973, 30–32; *Biographical Dictionary*, 168; *Qian Hanji* (Sibu congkan), 20.347–48. For marriage alliances with the Xiongnu, see Kroll 2006, 109–24.
- 34 *Hanshu* 78.3279.
- 35 *Hanshu* 78.3279. Yang Yun went to visit Xiao Wangzhi in the company of Zhang Yanshou and Dai Changle, his later accuser, and one more dignitary. For Zhang Yanshou and Dai Changle, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 56, 695–96.
- 36 *Hanshu* 66.2891–92. A Tang commentator explains this remark as follows: “At the time the envoy said the Chanyu wanted to come to the capital for an audience at the imperial court [so that he might ritually express his submission to the Han throne]. Therefore Yun claimed the Chanyu would not come.” See *Hanshu* 66.2892n9. It may be (though the record is not explicit) that Yang Yun even backed a plan to attack the Xiongnu.
- 37 *Hanshu buzhu* 66.10a; cf. *Hanshu* 66.2891–92.
- 38 *Hanshu* 66.2890.
- 39 *Hanshu* 78.3280; Watson 1974, 210–12. For Taizi Taifu (Senior Tutor to the Heir Apparent), see Bielenstein 1980, 74–77.
- 40 Xiao Wangzhi became Senior Tutor to the Heir Apparent in August/September of 56 BCE. For Huang Ba's promotion, see *Hanshu* 19B.807–9, 76.3110, 89.5187; Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 250; *Biographical Dictionary*, 150, 165.
- 41 *Hanshu* 78.3280; Watson 1974, 210–12.
- 42 See *Hanshu* 8.279, trans. Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 253; Swann 1950, 195, 195n290, 195n292. Loewe follows the sequence of events given there, though he does not mention Yang Yun's third visit to Xiao Wangzhi when the latter was demoted; however, explaining this demotion, he refers to an event that happened after it. See *Biographical Dictionary*, 607, 640.
- 43 See *Hanshu* 76.3214–16; cf. Hulsewé 1955, 180 (case no. 2), versus *Biographical Dictionary*, 150. Han was publicly executed in 56 BCE. Loewe points out that Yang Yun, who had previously been friendly with Han Yanshou, “played a part in the case against him” (*Biographical Dictionary*, 150). I find it difficult to agree with this in view of the data adduced above; perhaps Loewe was misled by the word *song* 訟, which means here “to reject a false [unjust] charge on behalf of another person,” according to Zhang and Ren 1988, 170. Had Yang Yun played a real role in constructing a case against his erstwhile friend, his nephew would hardly have chosen to illustrate Xuandi's ingratitude to Yang, his meritorious official, by citing Han Yanshou's execution.
- 44 *Hanshu* 76.3223: “Yun's friends [belonging to his] group (*dangyou*) should not occupy posts; they are like him; therefore all of them should be dismissed from their official posts and made commoners.” Xun Yue gives an abbreviated version: that the same Excellencies and Ministers “memorialized that all [Yun's] friends belonging to his group [or clique?] should be arrested

- and dismissed from [their] official posts” (*shou peng dangyou jie mian guan*). See his *Qian Hanji*, 20.351; also *Hanshu* 73.3110. Compare the term *dangyou* with the related formula *peng-dang* (cliques), said of those who “conceal each other’s [misdeeds]” (*Hanshu* 84.3423).
- 45 Compare Yang Yun’s futile attempt to reject the false charge against Han Yanshou; see *Hanshu* 66.2891.
- 46 *Hanshu* 9.277.
- 47 *Hanshu* 66.2890.
- 48 *Hanshu* 66.2890–91. Internal quotes mark a citation from *Analects* 4.12.
- 49 For Dai’s life, see *Hanshu* 66.2891, 78.3279.
- 50 *Hanshu* 66.2891–92, translation modified from Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 248, 248n19.2. According to Zhang Yan’s third-century commentary, “The Temple to Sovereign Earth [i.e., God of the Soil] is in Hedong; there the Son of Heaven is to sacrifice yearly.” Zhang Yan also mentions that a lack of rain is taken to be an overabundance of yin or female *qi*. (The Tang commentator Yan Shigu complains that Zhang Yan misunderstood the term *Annals* to refer to the Western Han records.) Xiahou must be Xiahou Sheng; see *Biographical Dictionary*, 595–96. Zhang Yan writes that it was Xiahou Sheng who admonished the King of Changyi, Liu He, in 74 BCE, after Zhaodi’s death. See *Biographical Dictionary*, 305–6; *Hanshu* 66.2892, 75.3155. Note that Xiahou Sheng’s interpretation of the same omen described in the *Annals* differs from that ascribed to Yang Yun in Dai Changle’s denunciation (see below). *Hanshu* 8.259, 8.266, record Xuandi’s visits to Hedong (three altogether).
- 51 *Hanshu* 66.2891–92. Neither the Son of Heaven nor his ministers were supposed to speak in jest, lest their intentions be misconstrued, as a well-known anecdote shows. See *Lüshi chunqiu*, juan 18, pian 2, 130.
- 52 *Hanshu* 66.2891. For Jin Shang, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 197, citing *Qian Hanji* 20.354.
- 53 See Hulsewé 1955, 75, 169, 171 (case no. 7), 172 (case no 2).
- 54 *Hanshu* 66.2891.
- 55 *Hanshu* 66.2891. The mention of “discord” originates from Xun Yue’s *Qian Hanji* 20.350.
- 56 When asked by a subordinate whether his intervention would save Han Yanshou’s life, Yang replied, “I cannot protect myself. As people say, ‘A mouse failed to retreat to its hole, since it held an auspicious tree fungus in its mouth’” (*Hanshu* 66.2891).
- 57 *Hanshu* 66.2893, trans. Hulsewé 1955, 74. For Tingwei (Commissioner of Trials), see Bielenstein 1980, 38–39. For Yu Dingguo, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 659–60.
- 58 *Hanshu* 66.2893. Cf. Hulsewé 1955, 175n4. Hulsewé translates *yaoyan* 妖言 (=妖) as *eyan* 惡言 (i.e., as “slandorous and evil words” or as “monstrous talk”) (pp. 175, 424); cf. Dubs 1938–55, vol. 1, 193n2, 244. *Yaoyan* 妖言 has also been rendered as “improper words,” as in Ch’ü T’ung-tsu 1972, 264–65, 264n66. In 1994 Lü Zongli offered this explanation: that the term originally referred to “rhymes spread by mouth” but eventually came to refer to any “baseless words spread by mouth,” with the rumor not necessarily in verse. Cf. Lü Zongli 2003, 14n4, 44n26, 64, 193–94, 218–20, 222, 239, 243, 244, 282; and 2006, esp. 43–48. In light of Lü’s findings, *yaoyan* as a legal term may well mean “portentous utterances” or “portentous and evil words.”
- 59 *Hanshu* 19B.807. The year ran from January/February 61 BCE to January/February 60 BCE.
- 60 *Hanshu* 8.266. Xun Yue confirms this date in *Qian Hanji*, 20.350.
- 61 *Hanshu* 17.671.
- 62 Su Yu (1874–1914 CE), quoted in *Hanshu buzhu* 17.29b.
- 63 Watson 1962, 118, 118n10, has Yang Yun executed in 55 BCE on charges of treason. Loewe 1974, 97, 147, says only that the date is given as either 56 or 55 BCE.
- 64 See Wilbur 1943, 395–96, 395n1; Hulsewé 1955, 173n3. I am grateful to Dorothée Kehren for alerting me to the Wilbur citation and providing me with a copy of the text.
- 65 *Qian Hanji* 20.350–51. Note also Xun Yue’s description of Yang Yun’s subsequent rustication,

during which time Yang exacerbated his crime by criticizing the imperial court in a letter, after which the emperor came to regard him as incorrigible.

- 66 *Hanshu* 96B.3927, 99B.4146.
- 67 *CHOC*, 238; cf. Bielenstein 1967, 97–98. An annotated translation of *Hanshu*, chaps. 61 and 96, is in Hulsewé 1979, 195–97, and 195–96n703.
- 68 *Hanshu* 99B.5547, translation modified from Dubs 1938–55, vol. 3, 366.
- 69 *Hanshu* 96B.5547, translation modified from Hulsewé 1979, 197: “After some years Wang Mang died and in this connection Li Chong, Protector-General of the Western Regions (Xiyu Duhu), perished; therefore the Western Regions severed relations [with us].” Of course, one cannot exclude the possibility that this translated passage was written by Ban Biao (3–54 CE) and not his son Ban Gu. Cf Hulsewé 1979, 197n713. Problems of geography and foreign policy are reviewed in Kroll 2005, 289–90, 329–33. For the term Xiyu Duhu, see Bielenstein 1980, 110, 112–13, 191n161.
- 70 *Hanshu* 66.2895.
- 71 See *Hanshu* 9.299n1, citing Ying Shao.
- 72 For differing views of the term *xingming*, see *Hanshu* 9.277, 9.278n4.
- 73 *Hanshu* 9.278.
- 74 See *Hanshu* 9.277; Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 299–301. Cf. Creel 1974, 270–76. For Ge Kuanrao, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 116.
- 75 See *Hanshu* 66.2894–97; *Wenxuan* 41.1869–72. This passage is translated in Watson 1962, 116–19.
- 76 Internal quotes mark a citation from *Analects* 7.18.
- 77 *Lu* (“to join”) is written as 勗 in *Wenxuan* 41.1870 and as 戮 in *Hanshu* 66.2895. Wang Xianqian mentions seeing a copy of the *Hanshu* where *lu* is written in the same way as in *Wenxuan*. He deems this way of writing the character to be more correct, though both *lu* characters are interchangeable.
- 78 *Hanshu* 66.2893; Watson 1962, 117.
- 79 Watson, unfortunately, leaves the term untranslated.
- 80 *Hanshu* 66.2896.
- 81 *Hanshu* 66.2894, translation modified from Ch’ü T’ung-tsu 1972, 121. In citing Yang Yun’s biography, I adopt the *jujia* 居家 (“took up residence in [his] house”) reading from *Qian Hanji*, 20.350, instead of *jiaju* 家居 in *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 82 *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 83 See *Hanshu* 66.2895 and the Li Shan (d. 689) commentary; cf. *Wenxuan* 41.1870 and *Shiji* 56.2052.
- 84 See Kroll 2001, vol. 1, 80–83, 98–99, 125, 135–36, 147, 212, 213n86, 254nn19, 21; vol. 2, 112, 433n6
- 85 *Shiji* 129.3281; *Hanshu* 62.4273; cf. Watson 1958, 68.
- 86 The *Shiji* gives two biographies of Fan Li, one in chapter 41 (“The Hereditary House of Goujian, King of Yue”) and one in chapter 129 (“Biographies of Money-Makers”). See *Shiji* 41.1739–56, esp. 41.1751–56; cf. Chavannes 1901, vol. 4, 439–42, 447–48. For Fan Li in the latter chapter, see *Shiji* 129.3256–57. Yet another name for Fan is Chiyi Zipi (Master of the Winebag Skins).
- 87 *Shiji* 41.1756.
- 88 *Shiji* 129.3257; Watson 1961, vol. 2, 479, 481. Cf. Swann 1950, 423, 425–26. The internal quotes mark a citation from *Guanzi* 1/1a, translation modified from Rickett 1985–98, 52.
- 89 The idea that Fan Li is presented by Cai Ze “as a recluse, needless to say, a paragon of a Taoist” was promoted by Timotheus Pokora, in an appendix to Pokora 1972, 167–72, secs. 6.2.4–6.2.6. This idea was conceived by my friend Pokora and myself during our correspondence of 1971. For Fan Li as one of the three outstanding statesman-thinkers, who “profoundly and most directly influenced” the four treatises ascribed to Huangdi, which some scholars relate to

- Huang-Lao Daoism over others' objections, see, for example, Peerenboom 1993; Chang and Feng 1998, 3–4, 10, 12, 16–18, 25, 34, 70.
- 90 See *Odes* (Mao no. 112); *Analects* 14.41, 18.7. Cf. *Shiji* 77.22377–79; Watson 1961, vol. 2, 491, 493; Swann 1950, 448, 450–51.
- 91 Sima Qian's *Shiji* also cites a contrasting story, that of the Qin Chancellor Li Si, who was aware that his position was becoming unstable but who was too power hungry to retire. See *Shiji* 87.2554. Cf. Bodde 1938, 24–25; Nienhauser 1994–present, vol. 7, 341.
- 92 Watson 1962, 116.
- 93 *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 94 *Hanshu* 66.2895.
- 95 For Fan Li, see *Shiji* 41.1753.
- 96 Therefore I reject the volume editors' suggestion (personal communication, August 2013) that the 10 percent refers to the modest interest rate Fan Li and Yang Yun charged. First, as far as we know, neither Yang nor Fan were involved in money-lending activities. Second, a passage in the *Gongyang* supports the association of the figure of one-tenth with moral behavior: it characterizes as “fair and proper” (*zhongzheng*) the conduct of those who tax at a rate of one in ten, while characterizing those who charge more as “a small or large [tyrant] Jie.” See *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuàn zhùshù* 16.8b (Lord Xuan, Year 15).
- 97 *Shiji* 130.3319: Sima Qian described that his history “brought to perfection the text of one line of thought” (*yijia zhi yan*, lit., “of one family or school of thought”). Cf. *Hanshu buzhu* 62.2735; cf. Watson 1958, 57, 66, 92–93, 224n33. See also Kroll 1981, 48, 54–55n10.
- 98 *Hanshu* 62.2737; Watson 1958, 67.
- 99 Ch'ü T'ung-tsu 1972, 121.
- 100 *Hanshu* 66.2896. Sima Qian wrote of one the money-makers he most respected, “Trading in furs is a shameful occupation (*ru chu*), but Yong Bo made a thousand catties of gold [at it]” (*Shiji* 129.3282).
- 101 See Ch'ü T'ung-tsu 1972, 121–122; *Shiji* 129.3272, 129.3283; Watson 1961, vol. 2, 499, 492.
- 102 See *Biographical Dictionary*, 498.
- 103 *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 104 For *wei . . . yi*, in modern Chinese usually rendered as “to make it appear that,” see Zhang and Ren 1988, 172. Maybe it means “to inspire with” or “to suggest, instill [an idea].”
- 105 Following Wang Xianqian's (1842–1918 CE) *Hanshu buzhu* 66.12a, I insert the character *yi* 以 (because) before *yanmei* 淹昧. Surely *yanmei* is an adjective describing the word *yu* 語 (utterances) that follows it. The Chinese translators of Yang Yun's biography into modern language render *yanmei yuyan* simply as “speeches,” without telling us whether the speeches are authentic or false (Zhang and Ren 1988, 172); but *yanmei* has the connotations of “dishonest” and “unsightly” and “secrets not fit to be divulged to others,” as *Hanyu dacidian*, vol. 5, 799, shows. Deeds of this kind were regarded as minor offenses insufficient to sully the reputation of a great minister, according to *Hanshu buzhu* 82.4911. But as an attribute describing “utterances,” *yanmei* more likely means “dishonest.”
- 106 Or, of not pleading guilty or admitting guilt (*bu fu*).
- 107 *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 108 I adopt Watson's interpretation of the passage, as in Watson 1962, 118, 118n9, which seems to reflect the commentary by Zhang Yan (third century): “The [period of] mourning does not exceed three years, so when a minister [or: subject] experiences banishment and exile, he begins anew after three months of living in a degraded condition” (*jiangju*). Liu Chang (1019–1068 CE) remarks that Yang Yun spoke only about “three years” for those who “perform obsequies to the dead,” not about “three months” for those “banished and exiled” (*Hanshu* 66.2896n2; *Wenxuan* 41.1871).

- 109 For both sacrifices, see Bodde 1975, 49–74, 317–25 (nn. 63, 64), 333–34. For Bodde’s belief that the *fu* functioned as a lesser summer counterpart of the *la*, see Bodde 1975, 322. None of the food, drink, or musical instruments mentioned in the passage allow us to determine whether it was the *fu* or the *la* festival that was the occasion for the poem. What is highly significant is that the poem celebrates the importance of “enjoying oneself” (*xing le*); this kind of joy or happiness is strongly associated with the *la* festival (or the *zha* or *cha* sacrifice of the Zhou) in various passages collected in *Taiping yulan* 33.4a.
- 110 *Se*, usually translated as “lute.” In *Hanshu* 66.2896, the musical instrument termed *se* is a thirteen-string psaltery. Cf. *Wenxuan* 41.1870, which identifies the instrument as a *qin*, a seven-string zither. Zhao girls were said to “pluck a singing *se*” (*Shiji* 129.3271; Swann 1950, 441).
- 111 *Wenxuan* 41.1871 reads *wu* 無 instead of the *fu* 拊 found in *Hanshu* 66.2896.
- 112 After the promulgation of the decree of 237 BCE ordering the expulsion of foreign officials serving at the Qin court, Li Si, a Qin minister who had come from the foreign kingdom (*keqing*) of Wey, wrote a famous memorial, which he then submitted to the Qin throne: “Beating on jugs, knocking on earthenware drums, plucking the zither . . . and striking thigh bones, while singing and crying ‘Woo! Woo!’ to delight the ear—such is the true music of Qin! . . . But today the Qin people refuse to pluck the zither and accept the Shao and Yu. Why is this so? Simply to enjoy what is before them, to suit their taste. That is all.” *Shiji*, 87.2545, translation modified from Nienhauser 1994–present, vol. 7, 339, which seems to be based on Bodde 1938, 19–20. Yang Yun’s letter shows that the traditions of Qin music remained popular long after 237 BCE.
- 113 Nan Shan here is in all probability the name of mountains also known as Zhongnan Shan, which belong to the Qinling range of mountains. They are south of the former Qin capital at Xianyang, which site was near the Han capital at Chang’an and the modern city of Xi’an.
- 114 According to Hulsewé 1985, 19, the Qin-Han *qing*, equivalent to 100 *mu*, was about 4.6 hectares.
- 115 *Hanshu* 66.2896. Cf. Wilbur 1943, 395; van Gulik 1961, 67; Watson 1962, 117–18.
- 116 Internal quotes mark a set phrase appearing earlier in Zhang Shizhi’s biography in *Hanshu* 50.2307. Cf. *Shiji* 102.2752; Watson 1961, vol. 1, 534. According to the commentator Li Shan, this quotation appears in *Chuci*; cf. *Wenxuan* 41.1871. In the first part of his letter, Yang Yun states that he “ventures to bear a grievance” against Sun Huizong, since the latter “has failed to think out deeply enough how this happened to him, Yun, but without hesitation followed the judgments of the ordinary people.” See *Hanshu* 66.2894.
- 117 *Hanshu* 66.2896. Master Dong (Dong Sheng) is almost certainly Dong Zhongshu, judging from a comparison of the passage cited with *Hanshu* 56.2521. Yang Yun’s letter reverses the order of sentences, however, and twice it reads *ming ming* 明明 (hastily, hard) instead of its synonym *huang huang* 皇皇. Yang also loosely cites other passages. See *Wenxuan* 41.1871; Watson 1962, 119. My translation is based mainly upon Nienhauser 1994–present, vol. 7, 341, but modified with reference to Loewe 2011, 87. The citation is from *Analects* 15/39.
- 118 See Kroll 2001, 54.
- 119 *Hanshu* 66.2897.
- 120 See Watson 1962, 118, 118n9; Dubs 1938–55, vol. 3, 40–42; Hulsewé 1990, 227.
- 121 For Yang Tan, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 636. For the term Dian Shuguo, see Bielenstein 1980, 40, 84, 109, 168, 149.
- 122 For this other noble Du Yannian, also called the Noble of Du, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 83–84. Du’s appointment as Yushi Dafu took place in 55 BCE.
- 123 *Hanshu* 66.2897. For Ge Kuanrao, see *Biographical Dictionary*, 116, 762. Ge held the post of Colonel of Internal Security (Sili Xiaowei), which post is discussed in Bielenstein 1980, 84–86. Ge committed suicide in 60 BCE. For Han Yanshou, see *Hanshu* 76.3210–16 and *Biographical Dictionary*, 150–51.
- 124 *Hanshu* 66.2898, esp. the Ru Chun (third-century) commentary; Zhang and Ren 1988, 167n5,

175. Note that Cheng, the accuser, who held the post of assistant to the groom, was an aide on the ministerial staff of the Commissioner of Transport, which post was formerly held by Dai Changle. On that post, see Bielenstein 1980, 35.
- 125 *Hanshu* 8.268; Dubs 1938–55, vol. 2, 253–54, 254n20.8, 276.
- 126 Cf. Hulsewé 1955, 74. For *dang* (to be charged with), cf. Hulsewé 1955, 80–83, 401n261, 403n268.
- 127 In place of *zheng* 正 (to correct), Xun Yue's *Qian Hanji* reads 止 (to stop), which is graphically similar; instead of *ying* 應 (to echo or to agree), Xun has *yingda* 應答 (to respond). See *Qian Hanji* 20.351.
- 128 *Hanshu* 66.2898. Most of the last sentence is modified from Hulsewé 1955, 274 (case no. 8).
- 129 *Shiji* 20.1066. For Chu Shaosun's information, see Pokora 1981, which shows that Yang Yun lived in the capital; also that he had access to the palace. If he happened to be in Chang'an, Chu could have even witnessed Yang Yun's execution. Certainly, Chu was in a position to know what was his sentence and how it was put into effect.
- 130 All Yang Yun's closest friends were dismissed in 54 or 53 BCE.
- 131 Ch'ü T'ung-tsu 1972, 264–65, 264n66.
- 132 Probably Fu Can (fl. 28 CE).
- 133 The *Hanshu* reading of the text of Zhang Yan's commentary adds a phrase here: "persons of truthfulness and sincerity; [beans] should be [kept] in granaries" (cf. *Hanshu* 66.2896). But in other respects it is less detailed than the *Wenxuan* reading. The tradition of comparing beans to honest and loyal officials at the monarch's court was continued in a children's rhyme circulated in 320 CE, under Jin, according to Lü Zongli 1994; cf. Lü Zongli 2003, 257–59.
- 134 *Wenxuan* 41.1871; cf. van Gulik 1961, 67, 67n1.
- 135 For reaching or not reaching Hedong, see *Hanshu buzhu* 66.12a.
- 136 For example, Gu Yanwu mentions the same three phrases as Zhou. Cf. *Hanshu buzhu* 66.13a (1293). Judging by a Russian translation of the Korean historical novel by Im Che (1549–1587 CE), author of *Susŏng chi* (*Record of the City of Grief*), a novel replete with historical allusions, Im also stressed that Yang Yun perished because he sang a song to the accompaniment of drums while drinking wine. See *Cherepakhovui sup* 1970, 205–6. Im's version of events obviously reflects the work of the two Chinese commentators of the third century.
- 137 *Hanshu* 66.2895–96.
- 138 And, moreover, a general rule in line with Xunzi's writings on mourning.
- 139 Editors' note: The Southern Mountains forge another association with death, since this is the burial place for many in the Chang'an area.
- 140 See *Hanshu* 66.2896; also Ulving 1997, entry nos. 1324, 2653, 1618. I thank Serge E. Yakhontov of St. Petersburg State University for a consultation concerning Archaic Chinese phonetics.
- 141 For example, see Karlgren 1950, 132–34. Had Dorothee Kehren's untimely death not prevented it, we would have chosen "Nanshan Revisited" as the title for our article on Yang Yun and the literary tradition that originated with his poem.
- 142 See *Chuci jizhu*, *Lisao*, 1.7a–b; cf. *Qu Yuan fu jiaozhu*, citing *Lisao*, 1.23–26, Jiang Liangfu 1957. Cf. Hawkes 1959, 23–26. Hawkes translates the text cited as follows: "Though famine should pinch me, it is small matter; / But I grieve that all my blossoms should waste in rank weeds." My thanks to Zoya Popova for providing me with bibliographical information on Hawkes's translation and the text of its passages referred to here.
- 143 See *Chuci jizhu* 1.5a, translation modified from Hawkes 1959, 24. For "fragrant flowers" in *Lisao*, see also Watson 1962, 233–34. In the "Summoning the Soul" ("Zhaohun") poem, the expression "overgrown with weeds" describes the state, to which the ruler possessing an abundant *de* power is reduced, when he is confronted with the widespread vulgarity among the power holders of his time. See *Chuci jizhu* 9.1b–2a; cf. Hawkes 1959, 103, 103n1.
- 144 *Hanshu* 66.2897; *Qian Hanji* 20.350–51.

- 145 *Analects* 7.12.
146 *Shiji* 83.2459.
147 *Shiji* 83.2479.
148 Sima Qian wrote of Lu Zhonglian, “I make much of the fact that while occupying the position of a commoner clad in the cloth woven of vegetable fibers, Lu behaved in an unfettered manner, ‘giving full rein to his will, and did not bow to the will’ of the feudal lords.” See *Shiji* 83.2459. Takigawa Kametarō remarks that Lu Zhonglian’s words (recorded only in the *Shiji*) resemble those of Zhuang Zhou (i.e., Zhuangzi).
149 *Wenxuan* 18.859.
150 *Wenxuan* 22.1057; cf. Fang 1958, vol. 1, 347–48.
151 *Du Shaoling ji xiang zhu*, vol. 3, *ce* 17, *juan* 7, 85–86. Cf. van Gulik 1961, 202, describing Zhang Fang’s erotic picture by Zhang Chou.
152 *Li Taibo shiwen* 23.3b.
153 *Hanshu* 66.2896.

Looking Backward

THE RISE OF MEDICAL TRADITION IN THE HAN PERIOD

Miranda Brown 董慕達

IN HIS CLASSIC HISTORY OF MEDICINE, THE ROMAN AUTHOR CELSUS (CA. 25 BCE–50 CE) remarked upon the universality of the craft. “Nowhere is this Art wanting,” he wrote, “for the most uncivilized nations have had knowledge of herbs, and other things to hand for the aiding of wounds and diseases.” Although the term “uncivilized” may strike us as unacceptably ethnocentric, Celsus’s remark upon the universality of medicine—and the shared impulse to forestall the inevitable—speaks to us.¹ Yet Celsus’s formulation raises a question. Healing (like the world’s oldest profession) may well have been a part of human life since the dawn of history, but the preoccupation with tracing its roots is specific to particular times and places. What explains the impulse, as Nathan Sivin would say, “to canvas the past to map the progress of medicine”?²

This chapter examines the history of medicine in early China, asking, When and why did the Chinese begin to trace the line of transmission of medicine from antiquity? When do we begin to see the rise of what might be thought of as a medical tradition in China, and how do we explain such a phenomenon? We will return briefly in the conclusion to the Greco-Roman case, in the hope that this discussion will pave the way for broader reflections on histories of healing and what inspired them.

The term “medicine” as used here is a tentative placeholder for the variety of diagnostic and therapeutic techniques, with the caveat that the term should not be confused with the modern, professional variants that predominate contemporary life or the technical knowledge sometimes construed by modern proponents as scientific. Instead, the

term will be used to cover the range of techniques related to the body, including those falling largely outside the boundaries of Western biomedicine: exorcisms, invocations, meditation, fasting and dietetics, sexual abstinence and manipulations, breathing exercises, and gymnastics. Such techniques were not thought of as merely concerned with the treatment of sickness or healing, for they were intended also to promote vitality and potency, and in some cases, immortality.

As competing definitions of “tradition” exist, this term is used here not in the sense of traditional, that is, an entity presumed to be unchanging or primordial,³ but rather follows Volker Scheid and others in seeing traditions as marked by dynamic processes that forge connections between the practices of the present and those believed to have been of antiquity. The impulse to forge connections is expressed through the fashioning of origin narratives (i.e., “stories about who they are, what they do, and why they do it”).⁴ Traditions, it bears emphasizing, need not involve factual or even comprehensive stories. Thus a medical tradition can refer to historical narratives articulating the relationships among healers in a historical sequence dating back from Han to antiquity.

On the question of *when* medical authors began to look backward, we will see that the first signs of such traditions are surprisingly late. Early medical authors discussed specific techniques of healing and occasionally mentioned exemplary figures of the past. Yet it is only in the late second century CE—four centuries *after* the earliest surviving medical manuscript—that techniques of healing were treated as an integrative art or healers routinely inserted into a historical narrative. Examination of varying perspectives on the all-important question of what prompted medical authors such as Huangfu Mi (215–282 CE) to reflect on the origins and history of medicine, when many discrete legends about individual healers had circulated for centuries, reveals that Liu Xin’s (ca. 46 BCE–23 CE) *Qilüe* (*Seven Summaries*), based on his father’s work, served as both archetype and impetus for later medical histories. Consideration of the evidence thus suggests that the emergence of a medical tradition owed much to the new ways of engaging the past that accompanied the reorganization of the imperial collections in 26 BCE.

Transmission without Tradition?

In contrast to modern American or European physicians, healers in early China did not acquire their knowledge of therapeutic arts in schools or academies, so far as we know. Their haptic knowledge appears to have been transmitted through a process of initiation, whereby a father or master would introduce his son or novice to the arts.⁵ Insofar as initiation entailed the handing down of acquired knowledge from one generation to the next, it may be thought of as a tradition.⁶ The production of a bibliography of all medical manuscripts in the imperial collection during the years 26–6 BCE, under the supervision of the imperial bibliographer Liu Xiang (77–6 BCE) and the imperial medical attendant Li Zhuguo, has sometimes been taken as a sign that the arts of healing had



FIG. 17.01 Rubbing of an Eastern Han pictorial stone, showing the legendary healer Bian Que as half bird, half human. Photograph of a rubbing in the collection of Michael Nylan.

emerged long before as an integral body of knowledge.⁷ Nonetheless, the survey of the early corpus suggests that medicine only came to be thought of by healers unambiguously as a single art, with its own history, in the late second century of our era.

The early Chinese corpus of the late third and second centuries BCE provides little evidence for a narrative tradition about the origins and history of healing and related arts. Take the manuals recovered from Zhangjiashan (ca. 186 BCE) and Mawangdui (ca. 168 BCE). Admittedly, a copy of the *Yinshu* (*Pulling Book*), which provides directions for therapeutic stretches and breathing exercises, mentions in passing one Pengzu, a figure renowned for his longevity,⁸ while the Mawangdui sexual cultivation texts open with comments from the Yellow Emperor and other mythical figures of high antiquity.⁹ Yet such brief glimpses of legendary figures offer no explanation of how such personalities were connected to other healers at the time of the manuscripts' production or before. As a result, the early manuscripts furnish material for histories of medicine rather than representing actual histories.

Even the splendid chapter on two court medics in the *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*),¹⁰ completed around 92 BCE by Sima Qian (145?–86? BCE), offers little evidence that healers themselves had invented narratives for how the art of healing came into being, or that they specified what relationship healers of their time bore to the ancient inventors of the craft. Granted, the *Shiji* biographies of the legendary Bian Que and Chunyu Yi (fl. ca. 180–154 BCE) relate the personal histories of the pair (Fig. 17.01).

The “Biography of Bian Que,” for instance, explains Bian Que’s name and identifies his master and even his sources of diagnostic prowess. We learn that Bian Que became a noted healer after he encountered a divine being who bestowed upon him a magical potion to see through solid objects, including bodies, and also a set of formulas.¹¹ Sima Qian also refers to another ancient figure, Yufu “who was able to treat illnesses without the use of medicinal decoctions, sweet and warm wines, stone needles, raising and pull-

ing exercises, massage therapy for calibrating the blood and vessels, or application of heat and poisons.”¹² Similarly, the *Shiji* biography of Chunyu Yi, the “Granary Master,” evinces some impulse to trace the history of the arts of healing, insofar as it stipulates Chunyu Yi’s connection with his two masters, the famous Gongsun Guang and the reclusive Yang Qing. By the *Shiji*’s account, Yang presented Chunyu Yi with his secret formulas and works of supposedly ancient provenance after verifying that Chunyu was in fact the “right person.”

The importance of Sima Qian’s biographies to later histories of medicine lay chiefly in his role in preserving, collecting, and creating narratives about medical personalities, which furnished later authors with the materials and framework to construct a coherent narrative about the history of the craft. His biography of Bian Que, for example, certainly influenced later authors of medical treatises, possibly even Zhang Zhong-jing (a.k.a. Zhang Ji, ca. 150–219 CE).¹³ In addition, Sima Qian was instrumental in the creation of Chunyu Yi’s persona. As Elisabeth Hsu points out, although much of the “Biography of the Granary Master” reads as if it were in Chunyu’s own voice, the text exhibits clear signs of being a composite of materials by different hands and even from different periods. In all likelihood, it was Sima Qian who wove from various strands of legends and textual fragments a coherent story about the career and life of Chunyu Yi.¹⁴ For this reason we may say that the judicious persona familiar to thousands of years of medical historians owes as much, if not more, to Sima as to any second-century BCE healer.

Despite its relevance to later medical authors per se, Sima Qian’s chapter about Bian Que and Chunyu Yi is not a history of medicine so much as a biography of two healers. As historian Jin Shiqi points out, the very title of the chapter (“The Biographies of Bian Que and the Granary Master”) alerts us that medicine was not Sima Qian’s main subject; after all, Sima did not entitle his chapter “The Biography of Healers,” even though both Bian Que and Chunyu Yi were court medical attendants of renown; and a chapter on “healers” would *not* have been out of character in the *Shiji*, given its collective biographies of diviners and classicists. In Jin’s view, Sima Qian’s choice of title reveals that he had a single rhetorical point to make when he rehearsed the personal histories of Bian Que and Chunyu Yi: given that the ills of the body were analogous to those of the body politic, the healer who “treated” (*zhi*) ailments stood in a metaphorical relationship to the worthy minister responsible for “treating” threats to the state, for whom Bian Que and Chunyu Yi functioned as textual doubles. And just as Bian Que and Chunyu Yi found it risky to treat the ruler’s body, officials like Sima Qian confronted real dangers when attempting to correct the ruler in policy making.¹⁵

Although the suggestion that the biographies should be read merely as allegory may be extreme, Jin’s observations nevertheless highlight the inappropriateness of reading the *Shiji* chapter as an early history of medicine. And indeed, Sima Qian offers nothing in the way of general reflections about medicine, aside from a passing comment that Bian Que was associated with the art of taking one’s pulse.¹⁶ Certainly, Bian Que and

Chunyu Yi were not inserted into a general narrative regarding the origins and history of the medical arts. Sima Qian brings up Yufu in the “Biography of Bian Que,” but Bian Que, his subject, specifically denies any connection to Yufu and his followers. Similarly, Chunyu Yi mentions works attributed to Bian Que but professes to know nothing about the teachers of his own masters. As a result, readers cannot trace several generations of continuous transmission, or even reconstruct the relationship between Bian Que and Chunyu Yi.¹⁷ The current versions of the biographies fail to recount the origins of medicine, the intermediate steps of transmission, and the exemplary figures of the past, not to mention the initial impetus behind the medical arts.

The *Shiji*’s lack of attention to the history of the medical arts need not surprise us, considering the absence of any single term for medicine in texts from the second and third centuries BCE. Early medical authors, in fact, did not hypostatize the various techniques of diagnosis or healing, referring to healing in terms of specific techniques, pulse diagnosis,¹⁸ the medicaments, moxa, stone needles, acupuncture, and pulling and massage exercises.¹⁹

In addition, the term *yi* 醫, which we now routinely use to signify “medicine” writ large, was one word used for the attendants charged with looking after the physical needs of others in the centuries before and after unification in 221 BCE. To be sure, one statement in the famous etymological dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* (*Explications of Words and Phrases*, submitted to the throne 121 CE) suggests that *yi* was synonymous with “healers”; as the text puts it, “*yi* were craftsmen who treated [or remedied] ailments.”²⁰ Yet not all early texts use *yi* in the sense of a healer. Some pre-unification works had different appellations for the men who attended to the diverse facets of the upkeep of the body. When discussing the organizing of the palace bureaus, the utopian *Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*, comp. ca. 221 BCE?) alludes to various *yi*, including the “*yi* of beasts,” the “*yi* of illnesses,” the “*yi* of sores,” and the “*yi* of foodstuffs,” all of which were placed under the supervision of the “master of the *yi*.” What catches the eye here is the reference to the “*yi* of foodstuffs,” explained in the *Rituals of Zhou* as the attendants charged with selecting and preparing the ruler’s meals and drinks.²¹ The Qin and Western Han manuscripts similarly differentiate among various attendants. We find not only seals with references to individuals such as Han the Fever-Sore Remover (Han Quchen),²² but also for court attendants who oversaw the nursing of imperial children (*ruyi*).²³

Not until the *Huangdi neijing* (*Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic*, comp. first century CE?)²⁴ do we find a possible reference to a notion of a medical art. Chapter 75 mentions the “way of the *yi*” (*yidao*, or *yi zhi dao*) twice in passing.²⁵ However suggestive, such phrases are rare in the *Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic* and other texts typically dated to the first century CE, including the *Shennong bencao jing* (*Divine Husbandman’s Pharmacopeia*) and the *Nanjing* (*Classic of Difficult Issues*). More often, the *Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic* conforms to the earlier practice of discussing specific techniques. Chapter 12 presents one such example, as it is devoted entirely to describing various forms of therapy, the administration of medicaments, the application of heat and fire, needling,

pulling, and massage. Though they are collected together in one chapter, the compiler emphasizes the diverse origins of these different techniques. The practice of using fine needles, for example, originated in the south, whereas the medicaments (*duyao*) were inventions from the west, and so forth.²⁶ Most tellingly, the word *yi* never once appears in chapter 12 at all. And indeed, the final comment highlights the diversity of therapeutic methods: “The sage combines what is *sundry* in treating, obtaining what is fitting for each case.”²⁷

The first definitive sign that medicine may have become perceived as a unified art is found in postfaces (*xu*) to medical treatises, possibly beginning with the *Shanghan zabing lun* (*Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*), a work traditionally ascribed to Zhang Zhongjing. If it is the work of the early third-century healer, the postface would be noteworthy on several counts.²⁸ To begin with, the text breaks with the earlier practice of classifying healing according to specific techniques, instead acknowledging that all the different techniques constitute healing and conflating healing with diagnosis.²⁹ The new status of medicaments (*yi**yao*) is also evident from the postface to the *Maijing* (*Pulse Classic*), a work attributed to the imperial medical attendant Wang Shuhe (a.k.a. Wang Xi; ca. third century CE). Reflecting upon the risks of therapies, Wang wrote, “The deployment of the arts of healing and medicaments (*yi**yao*) is linked with matters of life and death.”³⁰ As Wang was concerned here with the difficulties of pulse diagnosis, his term *yi**yao* encompassed diagnostic practices as well as therapy. The postface to Huangfu Mi’s *Zhenjiu jiyayijing* (*ABCs of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, comp. ca. 256–260 CE) presents a third example. In his opening sentence, Huangfu spoke of the ancient roots of the “way of the *yi*,” and in the next breath he explained the origins of medicaments and decoctions, pulse diagnosis, techniques for observing a person’s appearance, and acupuncture needles.³¹ The foregoing evidence suggests that by the third century, the diverse techniques of prognosis and healing had been subsumed under a single rubric.

While framing diagnosis and therapy as a unified art, our second- and third-century compilers began to look back at the history of medicine, a development crucial in the formation of the tradition. Zhang Zhongjing’s monumental treatise opens by recounting the historical feats of exemplary healers, whom he not only acknowledged as personal heroes but also claimed as his forerunners. “Each time I reflect on how Bian Que entered the state of Guo to examine the crown prince or how he gazed from afar at the Lord of Qi and discovered his illness,” Zhang wrote, “I come away sighing with admiration for his talents.” Going conceptually a step further, Zhang traced the history of the art via his own relationship to figures such as Bian Que: “In high antiquity there were the Divine Husbandman and the Yellow Emperor, Qibo, Bogao, Lord Thunder (Leigong), Shaoyu, Shaoshi, and Zhongwen.” Many of these legendary culture heroes had already appeared in earlier texts, such as the manuscripts recovered from the Mawangdui site and the *Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic*. Nonetheless, Zhang Zhongjing was one of the first writers to trace the exemplars through the successive periods

that separated high antiquity from his era, moving from the legendary into historical and then into the stuff of living memory. “In middle antiquity there was Lord Changsang and Bian Que,” he noted. “In the Han there was Yang Qing, who held the eighth order of honor, as well as the Granary Master.”³² Zhang’s account is noteworthy as the prototype for many later medical treatises in their narratives about the origins and history of Chinese medicine.

This genealogical impulse was broadly shared among medical authors of the third century. As with Zhang Zhongjing, Wang Shuhe looked back upon his predecessors with esteem verging on veneration. He praised Bian Que and Attendant He (ca. 546 BCE) for their prowess as healers. He also singled out Zhang Zhongjing for his “clear-sighted” (*ming shen*) investigations of illness and for his thorough diagnoses: “If there was the slightest modicum of doubt, Zhang Zhongjing would investigate matters, searching for verification.”³³ Other comments by Wang reveal his view of medicine as a continuous tradition stretching from antiquity to the recent past, as when he declared, “At this time I have selected and collected the works of authors from Qibo to Hua Tuo, their classics, discourses, essentials, and judgments, and combined them into a work of ten rolls.” As some of the figures mentioned by Wang may be unfamiliar, it is worth highlighting the span of time that separated Qibo from Hua Tuo (d. ca. 208 CE). Qibo was presumed to be a contemporary of the entirely legendary culture hero called the Yellow Emperor, whereas Hua Tuo had died only decades before Wang composed the *Pulse Classic*.³⁴

In the late third century CE, Huangfu Mi offered the fullest account of the history of the arts of medicine. Given its importance to our narrative, it is worth looking at an extended excerpt:

It has been a long time since the Way of the Healer arose. In high antiquity, the Divine Husbandman first tasted the grass and trees and thereby came to understand [the properties] of the hundred medicines. Consulting with the likes of Qibo, Bogao, and Shaoyu, the Yellow Emperor inspected the five yin and six yang visceral systems within the body and synthesized the rectilinear and collateral vessels, blood, *qi*, appearance, and indicators without. All these were examined in light of the conditions of Heaven and Earth, verified with respect to humans and beasts, and rooted in the different natures; once the mysteries and transformations had been exhaustively interrogated, the way of needling came into being. Their analyses were of the utmost subtlety. Lord Thunder inherited this enterprise and transmitted it to his heirs. Possessing the abilities of a secondary sage, Yi Yin [advisor to the Shang dynasty founder, trad. seventeenth century BCE] edited the *Divine Husbandman’s Classic of Pharmacopeia* to create the text called the *Decoctions*.

Among the famed healers of middle antiquity were Yufu, Attendant Huan, and Bian Que. The Qin had Attendant He, and the Han, the Granary Master. Their treatises captured root principles and thus they did far more than just

examine the ill. During the Han, there were also Zhang Zhongjing and Hua Tuo, who used extraordinary formulas and unusual treatments, many of whom had their teachings disseminated to the world. The works of these figures I could not record in detail.³⁵

Admittedly, Huangfu's short history of the "way of the *yi*" is just that, a story. Readers familiar with later histories of medicine will notice, not only the inclusion of mythical or semimythical figures (such as the Yellow Emperor and Bian Que), but also the large gaps in time between healers. Thus Huangfu's account does not allow us to trace continuous lines of textual or technical filiation. Yet for all its limitations, Huangfu's telling presents points of interest. More than Zhang Zhongjing and Wang Shuhe, Huangfu emphasizes the venerability of the art. The way of medicine, he tells us, has roots in deep antiquity. In addition, the picture of medicine is elaborated considerably since Zhang's earlier account, with Huangfu adducing no fewer than fourteen figures (most dating from the highest antiquity). What is more, we learn how medicine changed and developed over time: the Divine Husbandman revealed the power of medicinal herbs; the Yellow Emperor and his interlocutors discovered the key features of the human body, a discovery necessary for acupuncture; and Yi Yin edited the *Divine Husbandman's Pharmacopeia*. Thus, Huangfu Mi provided specific connections between figures separated widely in time and space and associated with diverse textual corpuses, though we cannot be sure that these connections were original to him.

Huangfu's emphasis on textual transmission suggests, finally, that by the time of his compilation medicine was conceived of as a proper, freestanding tradition. Whereas earlier compilers had merely listed figures in a loose temporal sequence, Huangfu provided specific lines of transmission and considerably greater detail. When he wrote that the Yellow Emperor's disciples produced treatises that were then transmitted to Lord Thunder, who in turn imparted such knowledge to his "heirs" or "later men" (*houren*), his term referred specifically to disciples, that is, descendants within a lineage.

Huangfu Mi's method seems to have been to recount the origins and evolution of the curative arts. Granted, we may wonder whether his conception of the "way of the *yi*" focused on healing, as opposed to the nourishment of vitality or even what we might think of as the esoteric arts. That said, his short narrative did not include the mythical Pengzu nor other personalities associated elsewhere (in Mawangdui) with sexual cultivation techniques. Closer examination gives no reason to suspect that Huangfu Mi excluded the esoteric arts from the way of the *yi*, however, as Hua Tuo, the figure extolled by the court physician Wang Shuhe, and Hua's disciples won fame among Hua's contemporaries not only for their curative prowess but also for their rumored longevity.³⁶ In addition, another figure praised by Huangfu Mi, Wang Shuhe, did not see pulse diagnosis and exorcism as mutually exclusive. As the present-day historian Li Jianmin notes, a number of entries in the *Pulse Classic* attributed illness to ghosts or spirits and prescribed formulas for their expulsion.³⁷

Questions of Timing

Turning to the question of why early third-century BCE authors such as Huangfu Mi, in contrast to their predecessors, thought of healing as a single tradition, we confront competing hypotheses. The most plausible scenario may be that the conceptualization of a medical tradition owed much to the reorganization of the imperial library during the years 26–6 BCE, which prompted profound changes in the very concept of textuality and inspired medical authors to aggregate diverse techniques and disparate figures under a single rubric, which eventually led to a narrative history of said tradition.

Of course, the skeptic might ask whether Chunyu Yi and other earlier healers had not previously conceived of healing as a discrete and integrated tradition. Might not the impression that historical reflections on the medical tradition only began in the late second or third century CE be due more to the accidents of survival of certain texts than to any real historical shift? Suppose that Chunyu Yi had written some treatise, to which he affixed a postface where he recounted, like Huangfu Mi, the feats of exemplary healers, but that postface has not survived. Certainly there are reasons to suspect that the materials narrated in Chunyu's voice in the *Shiji* do not represent the totality of his lifetime production. As one scholar has remarked, the portrayal of Chunyu Yi in the *Shiji*'s "Biography of the Granary Master" affords clues that Sima Qian drew from a larger corpus associated with Chunyu to create a coherent biography.³⁸ The same skeptic could point out that some of the sources marshaled by third-century CE medical authors already existed in Chunyu Yi's time. To take a single example, the stories about Attendant He that were highlighted by Wang Shuhe and Huangfu Mi appear in pre-unification sources, the *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo Traditions*, comp. fourth century BCE or later) and the *Guoyu* (*Discourses of the States*, third century BCE?).³⁹ Nor were the tales about Bian Que new to the second century CE, since they appear in Sima Qian's *Shiji* (ca. 90 BCE), which was itself based upon earlier sources.⁴⁰

Still, there are reasons to believe that Chunyu Yi and other early authors were not in a position to write histories of the medical arts, even though many of the ingredients that went into genealogies existed long before Huangfu Mi. First, most of the reflections on the origins and evolution of medicine appear in postfaces, yet postfaces, which reflect complex notions of authorship, were not common before the end of the first century BCE. Only after late Western Han did author-compilers make a habit of identifying their authorship, expressing their hopes for a good reputation in posterity.⁴¹

Second, early medical compilers would have had great difficulty laying their hands on manuscripts that supplied much information about figures from the pre-unification period. For example, the *Zuozhuan*, which presents the fullest and earliest surviving account of the Qin court physician and personality Attendant He, did not widely circulate until the late first century BCE, it being late Western Han before members of the ruling elite promoted that text at the capital.⁴² Nor did the *Shiji*, an important source of information for third-century BCE authors, circulate widely before late Western Han.⁴³

Third, in the unlikely event that men like Chunyu Yi had access to many old manuscripts, it is far from a foregone conclusion that they would have culled such works for clues about the origins of medicine. As Michael Nylan has shown in earlier work, at the end of the first century BCE even court-appointed classicists, some of them the most educated members of the realm, found it difficult to decode old manuscripts transcribed in the archaic scripts of the pre-unification period;⁴⁴ hence the belief held by many educated members of the Western Han elite that understanding old texts required the guidance of a master⁴⁵ (medical students and medical authorities being no exception). Chunyu Yi only became a successful healer once he found a master who could explain the larger import of medical texts, and his biography reveals how crucial his master's explanations (*yan*) were to his grasp of the proper applications of formulas and other forms of therapy. As Nathan Sivin explains it, Chunyu Yi's biography betrays the belief that "the truths were too deeply embedded in these texts" and that "in the degenerate present only those initiated by a master could hope to comprehend them."⁴⁶

All this raises the question of what drove the later transformations in conceptions of healing. What specifically had changed in the centuries between Chunyu Yi and Huangfu Mi? Did the rise of narratives about the origins and evolution of healing and other related arts reflect larger shifts in medical practice? As Nathan Sivin emphasizes, in Chunyu's day medicine was seen as a form of haptic knowledge that could be practiced by anyone from itinerant healers to nobles and gentlemen with an interest in the diverse techniques of prognosis and therapy; medicine was hardly the exclusive preserve of any social group or profession. As a result, it is entirely plausible that medicine had yet to emerge as a distinct body of knowledge, let alone the subject of serious theorizing or mythologizing. Conversely, by the late second century of our era medicine could be seen as a recognizable body of knowledge with a history of its own, which suggests that healers might finally have emerged as a distinctive social group looking to shore up their legitimacy. If this was indeed the case, then what better way than to trace their activities back to ancient sages?

The evidence at hand does not support the notion of a major break in tradition, since healing remained the prerogative of anyone who chose to practice, until, during the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), it finally became a recognized occupation.⁴⁷ Hence the loose way in which the term *yi* was used in late Western Han, in Eastern Han, and in the first post-Han centuries by anyone with some facility or interest in healing and related arts. The term could refer equally to "quack healers," court medics, county officials who applied moxa and acupuncture to the sick, members of the frontier army who kept track of the supplies of medicine, senior officials famous for their medical knowledge and curative prowess, and even one master who never saw patients himself but purportedly initiated others into the healing arts.⁴⁸

To explain the rise of a coherent tradition, we are better served by taking a closer look at the classical turn in late Western Han, which furnished later medical compilers such as Huangfu Mi with the sense that the distant past could be understood with

the help of interpretative tools (some of them newly created). In the late first century BCE the imperial bibliographer Liu Xiang, his son Liu Xin, and Liu Xiang's protégé Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE) embraced the idea that it should be possible to bypass long-standing oral traditions, interpreting the textual remnants of the ancient sages directly.⁴⁹ Liu Xiang and the members of his circle working in the imperial libraries thus devoted their energies to creating critical editions from pre- and post-unification materials. One such text, the *Zhanguo* (*Stratagems of the Warring States*), furnishes accounts of Bian Que that may predate or postdate those found in the *Shiji*.⁵⁰

This coterie in Chengdi's court meanwhile developed word lists and lexicons, whose main purpose was to facilitate the deciphering of unfamiliar texts written in regional dialects or archaic scripts. Not surprisingly, perhaps, this same group of bibliophiles was instrumental in bringing attention to important works associated with various recent courts. For example, Liu Xiang's and Yang Xiong's admiration for the *Shiji* led them to portray it as a model of historical writing, which increased its prominence.⁵¹ All this, presumably, opened the thinking of later medical authors to more sophisticated concepts of medical narrative than had been customary in mid-Western Han.

And indeed, if we turn to the medical postfaces of the late second and third centuries BCE, the influence of the classical turn is evident. Those in late Eastern Han and early post-Han not only believed that they could reconstruct old texts but also felt obligated to do so. Zhang Zhongjing, following in the same rhetorical line as the late Western Han classicizers, expressed confidence that he could bypass the technical traditions appertaining to individual lineages or households (*jiaji*), which purportedly obscured rather than illuminated the “larger import of the classics.” His efforts to collect the “traces of the ancients” suggest that he took to heart the lessons formulated by Liu Xiang and his circle at Chengdi's court: “I have exerted myself in seeking the teachings of the ancients and chosen widely from the multitudes of formulas. Consequently, I have selected from the *Basic Questions*, the *Nine Chapters*, the *Eighty-One Difficulties* [i.e., the *Nanjing*], the *Great Disquisitions of the Yin and Yang*, the *Record of Medicine for the Developing Fetus and Head*, as well as the [techniques] for differentiating the pulse and indicators, to make the *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*, totaling 16 rolls.”⁵²

Wang Shuhe, for his part, saw his contribution in terms of a larger project of textual restoration. Echoing the complaints of earlier figures about the abstruseness of medical classics, he wrote, “The texts transmitted from the sages are mysterious, and so over the ages few practitioners have been able to employ them.” Wang's remark about the difficulties entailed by the corrupted textual traditions should be taken with a grain of salt, if only because Wang evidently believed that by collating different editions of texts, he would secure himself a place in “the line of ancient worthies.”⁵³

The influence of the classical turn under Chengdi is most marked in the works of Huangfu Mi, an esteemed scholar working along the same lines as Chengdi's classicists, as he acknowledged.⁵⁴ Like Wang Shuhe, Huangfu emphasized the corrupted and

fragmentary state of the textual record: “At present there is the *Needle Classic* in nine rolls, the *Basic Questions* in nine rolls, and the 298 rolls that make up the *Inner Classic*. Parts have also been lost. And so even where the analyses are far-reaching, relating a great many things, they are of little practical use, and much of the text is jumbled.” Such problems notwithstanding, Huangfu asserted that, by sifting through the textual traces of the sages, the original sequence and wording of the classics could be restored by discerning readers like himself. As the format as well as the content of such texts embodied the sage’s understanding of the body, Huangfu believed that his exegetical efforts would ultimately help clarify the underlying principles of medicine.⁵⁵

Thus the reorganization of the imperial collections in 26–6 BCE almost certainly proved instrumental to the formation of a coherent medical tradition in China. As the details of the reorganization may be unfamiliar, it is worth saying a few words about the circumstances behind it. The process of collecting and cataloguing the imperial library—whose holdings included writings on disparate subjects, including astrology, classical learning, and statecraft—was supervised by the father-son pair Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, assisted by famous classicists such as Yang Xiong. By some conventional accounts the ambitious project took place at a time when rule by the Han dynasty was faltering, its legitimacy challenged; revisionist accounts, by contrast, tend to stress that Chengdi’s patronage of the classicists had less to do with any crisis of legitimacy than with his own interests and ambitious policy agenda.⁵⁶

In any event, the editing, cataloguing, and categorizing of all manuscripts of recognized importance, not to mention the supervising of these tasks, represented a considerable achievement.⁵⁷ Not only did Liu Xiang and Liu Xin create definitive editions of the technical literature (*shu*), including the medical arts (not to mention the Five Classics, associated traditions, and masterworks); they also created a subject catalogue for all items in the imperial library, including for medicine.⁵⁸ The consolidation of the medical corpus (*yijing*) appears to have been one immediate consequence of the library project, for Liu Xiang and the imperial medical attendant collected and catalogued a broad range of works concerned with diagnosis and therapy. Judging from surviving fragments of the *Seven Summaries* by Liu Xin (a revision of Liu Xiang’s preliminary catalogue) and from the bibliographic treatise of the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), which closely follows the *Summaries*, such an effort resulted in a list of major works of medicine, including a number of titles that no longer survive.⁵⁹

Before plumbing the details of the *Summaries* and the *Hanshu* treatise, it makes sense to note their relationship: for the most part, the contents and wordings of the two catalogues are virtually identical,⁶⁰ suggesting that Ban Gu copied from Liu Xin, who had earlier copied from his father, Liu Xiang. The most notable difference lies in their use of the term “esoteric arts,” or *fangji*: Liu Xin defined *fangji* as healing, formula making, the techniques of the bedchamber, and the methods for achieving immortality; by contrast, the compiler of the *Hanshu* bibliographic treatise, about a century after Liu Xin, used the rubric *fangji* more broadly to subsume astrology, hemerology, and divination, as well as

the classics of healing and formula making, the techniques of the bedchamber, and the arts of achieving immortality.⁶¹ Liu Xin, like the compiler of the bibliographic treatise, lists the four kinds of *fangji* alongside techniques for divination, an arrangement that suggests close associations between healing and the other technical arts.⁶²

It is in the *Summaries* and the *Hanshu* bibliographic treatise that we see the first evidence that the term *yi* can mean “diagnosis and therapy,” though even the late Western Han authors used the term *yi* more narrowly than did Huangfu Mi when speaking of the “way of the *yi*.” Whereas the *Hanshu* treatise placed formulas in a related but separate category, Huangfu Mi’s “way of the *yi*” included formulas or prescriptions (*fang*), such as medical decoctions:

The cardinal formulas are rooted in the heating and cooling properties of the herbs and acupuncture needles and are apportioned according to the depth or shallowness of the illness’s [penetration], reaching their target by spreading the flavors of the medicaments and taking as their basis the appropriate responses of the *qi*. Such formulas differentiate between the five bitter and six astringent flavors, causing the water and fire to be level so as to clear whatever is blocked and loosen whatever is congealed, and thereby return the body to its equilibrium. In cases of error about what is appropriate, the application of heat increased the heat, or the application of cold increased the cold, and so the essence and *qi* caused internal damage that could not be seen outside. All of these are due only to errors. Hence the proverbial saying, “If one has an illness that cannot be regulated, this is usually because one obtained a mediocre healer (*yi*).”⁶³

Neither the two Lius nor the compiler(s) of the *Hanshu* bibliographic treatise provided any rationale for listing the cardinal formulas in a separate category from the healing classics. Judging from surviving manuscripts dating from Western Han, the separate designation may reflect the tendency for writings about formulas to circulate as independent texts. In any case, the close association between the formula manuscripts and the classics of healing is evident from two features: first, in both catalogues the cardinal formulas follow immediately after the classics of healing; and second, the references to “mediocre healers” indicates that the cardinal formulas were one of the resources used by the *yi* to heal the body.

At the same time, the *Summaries* and the *Hanshu* treatise bear witness to the gradual expansion in scope of the term *yi*, for in them *yi* no longer merely described medical attendants but also a range of diagnostic and curative techniques:

The various classics of medicine investigate the blood and vessels, bones and marrow, yin and yang, and the inner and outer regions of man; they illuminate the roots of the myriad illnesses and the boundaries between life and death,

so as to list the proper applications of the needles, decoctions, and heat, and to calibrate the proper mixtures of the hundred medicaments and dosages. All these cause the body to reach its equilibrium, much like magnets attracting iron; this is to use substances to activate one another. But the unskillful healer (*yi*) will lose sight of the larger pattern [of the illness], mistaking the sick who can be healed with those suffering from acute and irremediable illnesses, and those that will live with those who will die.⁶⁴

Note that in this passage all of the disparate therapies have been brought together under the single rubric *yi*. Evidently, the two Lius and Ban Gu had concluded that the *yi* corpus, in spite of its diversity, was sufficiently integrated in its contents and aims.

The imperial reorganization was also responsible for producing the earliest surviving history of medicine, as we see from another excerpt found in both the *Summaries* and the *Hanshu* treatise: “In high antiquity, there was Qibo and Yufu; in middle antiquity, there was Bian Que and Attendant He of Qin. Their analyses of illnesses had implications for the state; they investigated and examined [the sick] to learn how to govern. And since the founding of Han, there has been the Granary Master [Chunyu Yi]. At present [some? all? of] the arts have fallen into obscurity, and for this reason we have analyzed the documents, ordering the arts into four kinds.”⁶⁵

Here we see that Liu Xiang and Liu Xin and Ban Gu have charted the progress of medicine from high antiquity to their own times, embracing both the Spring and Autumn period (771–475 BCE) and the recent past. Naturally, they were not the first to mention very early healers. As we have seen, earlier works contain isolated references to mythical healers such as Yufu or Bian Que. In contrast to earlier works, however, which make only passing reference to exemplary healers, the *Summaries* weaves various legends and persons (real or mythical) together in a single coherent, albeit nascent narrative history of medicine.

That the histories drew from such a wide range of sources, including historical chronicles, deserves attention. Consider, for example, the reference made by Liu Xin to Attendant He, who was unlikely to have been a household name, as he appears in two historical chronicles that did not circulate widely, the *Zuozhuan* and the *Guoyu*,⁶⁶ making it somewhat unlikely that anyone before the reign of Chengdi would have connected this figure to a coherent medical tradition. This may explain why later Eastern Han and post-Han medical writings show clear signs of having been influenced by the *Summaries*. For example, the decision on the part of the Lius and Ban to separate time into the three discrete stages of high antiquity, middle antiquity, and the recent past furnished the prototype for the three postfaces mentioned above. As Table 17.01 reveals, Zhang Zhongjing, Wang Shuhe, and Huangfu Mi all closely followed Liu Xin’s account, even as they elaborated on it. Huangfu Mi acknowledged his debt explicitly, saying: “I have followed the text of the *Summaries*, the ‘Treatise,’ and the eighteen-roll version of the *Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic*.”⁶⁷

TABLE 17.01 Historical accounts in the healing traditions compared

	LIU XIN	ZHANG ZHONGJING	WANG SHUHE	HUANGFU MI
High antiquity	Qibo and Yufu	Divine Husbandman, Yellow Emperor, Qibo, Bogao, Lord of Thunder, Shaoyu, Shaoshi, and Zhongwen	Qibo	Divine Husbandman, Yellow Emperor, Qibo, Qigao, Shaoyu, Lord of Thunder, Yi Yin
Middle antiquity	Bian Que and Physician He	Lord Changsang and Bian Que	Bian Que and Physician He	Yufu, Physician Huan, and Bian Que
Qin				Physician He
Han	Chunyu Yi	Yang Qing and Chunyu Yi	Hua Tuo and Zhang Zhongjing	Chunyu Yi, Hua Tuo, and Zhang Zhongjing

Conclusion

While early medical authors had written about therapy and diagnosis for centuries, before the second century of our era they did not, judging from the extant literature, articulate how such techniques provided continuities with antiquity. The catalyst for such a development was most probably largely external, the crucial events being the classical turn and the reorganization of the imperial collections around 26 BCE. The classical turn furnished medical authors such as Huangfu Mi with not only the confidence but also the means to reconstruct the history of medicine from textual remnants. The reorganization of the imperial collections contributed in several ways to the impulse to write an origin narrative and history of the healing arts. In collecting and cataloguing all existing medical texts, Liu Xiang and Liu Xin were probably responsible for creating the very category of medicine. In composing the first medical genealogy, the Lius provided later compilers, including Huangfu Mi, the tools with which to imagine themselves as part of a continuous tradition that stretched back to the beginning of human history.

A final caveat about the significance of the foregoing: the magnitude of the changes described above should not be exaggerated. After all, these histories relating the medical traditions were the preserve of the classicizing governing elite during the two Han dynasties and early Six Dynasties, while the majority of actual healers were of low status for most of Chinese history, as we know from Geoffrey Lloyd and Nathan Sivin.⁶⁸ Such healers, who lacked access to the classical tradition, would not have been greatly affected by changes in how their elite counterparts thought about the transmission of knowledge.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the narratives and histories by Liu Xiang and his successors set the subsequent pattern of medical writing. From Tang (618–907 CE) to the end of Qing (1644–1911 CE), medical writings evinced a considerable degree of historical (or pseudo-historical) consciousness. Few of the late medical works, in fact, lack postfaces, a feature designed to reinforce the sense of medicine as a tradition. In such postfaces, the histories became ever more elaborated. Consider, for example, the following account from a Tang work:

In ancient times, Qibo transmitted his learning to the Yellow Emperor, who transmitted his learning after nine [generations of] teachers to Yi Yin. Yi Yin in turn transmitted his learning to the [sage-king] Tang, and Tang transmitted his learning through six generations of teachers to Taigong. Taigong transmitted his learning to King Wen, who in turn, transmitted his learning through nine generations of teachers to Attendant He, who transmitted his learning through six generations of teachers to Qin Yueren [i.e., Bian Que]. Qin Yueren first established the chapter and verse commentary [to the *Nanjing*], and, through nine generations of teachers, he transmitted his learning to Hua Tuo. Hua Tuo thereupon transmitted his learning to Master Huang, who then transmitted his learning to Teacher Cao, whose taboo name was Yuan and whose style was “the True Way.”⁶⁹

Like Huangfu Mi, this Tang author—one of countless examples—situated himself within a broader tradition that stretched back to the dawn of time. As with other later medical authors, he rehearsed the history of the art, commenting on the lines of transmission that connected the author to the great figures of the past, the acts and contributions of healers that spanned the intervening centuries, and the texts and formulas that marked the stages of development in the “way of the *yi*.” Besides composing such postfaces, the medical compilers of middle-period and late imperial China took the historicist impulse a step further, composing works that covered the whole history of the art, making the lore about exemplary healers central to their vision. Some notable examples include the Tang-dynasty *Mingyi lu* (*Record of Famous Healers*), the *Yishuo* (*Sayings about Healers*, dated 1189 CE), and the *Yishi* (*History of Medicine*, sixteenth century CE).

Indeed, in the absence of professions, guilds, and occupational groups, it was this practice of looking backward that served as the focal point of the tradition. This worked so well, in fact, that this approach survived into the twentieth century. Facing the challenge posed by proponents of Western biomedicine, defenders of indigenous traditions of medicine resorted to a variety of strategies to prove their worth, including producing histories of medicine to illustrate China’s status as the “world’s oldest continuous civilization.”⁷⁰ Granted, such histories told new stories about the progress of medicine, stories fitting the claim that Chinese medicine had an experiential core and was thus worth preserving. Even so, the twentieth-century histories exhibit considerable continuity with their premodern counterparts. Therefore most modern histories—be they scholarly monographs, popular books, or websites—begin by recounting the same legends found in Huangfu Mi (albeit with new ideological slants). Such accounts pay lip service to the Yellow Emperor before solemnly repeating the supposedly miraculous feats of Attendant He, Bian Que, Chunyu Yi, Zhang Zhongjing, Hua Tuo, and Huangfu Mi.⁷¹

In closing, we may ask to what extent we can generalize from the history of medicine in China to the histories of medicine in other places. Interestingly, historians have

yet to explain the emergence and timing of a medical tradition in the Greco-Roman world. Although this lies outside of the scope of this chapter, the Chinese case illuminates possible avenues of inquiry, even if, obviously enough, the Greco-Roman case is not exactly analogous to the Chinese. In Greece the notion of a unified medical art may have emerged long before it did in China, but there are signs of a similar process taking place in the classical Mediterranean, since the habit of reflecting upon the history of the healing arts appears to have emerged relatively late. In fact, we must wait until the third century BCE, in Alexandria, for the first history of medicine, which can be traced back to a work called *Against Common Opinions*, by Herophilus of Chalcedon, a physician best known for his dissections and vivisections.⁷² This historical tradition, in turn, came to influence the Roman thinker Celsus, with whom we began this chapter.⁷³ Like their Chinese counterparts, the Greco-Roman authors produced origin narratives and histories of the medical tradition. Herophilus, for example, traced the transmission of Hippocratic learning over time, while Celsus investigated the rise and fall of various doctrines and schools.⁷⁴ Not coincidentally, scholars believe that the establishment of the Library at Alexandria might have been responsible for the formation of the Hippocratic corpus circa 300 BCE.⁷⁵ It was precisely at this time that Herophilus, whose career was closely linked to the Alexandrian court, inaugurated the practice of authoring or compiling retrospective accounts of medicine.⁷⁶ No doubt, much work remains to be done. Still, the parallels are tantalizing, insofar as they tie the penchant for looking backward to the efforts of royal bibliographers in both the classical Mediterranean and in Han China.

Notes

- 1 Celsus, *De Medicina*, vol. 1, 3.
- 2 Sivin 1998, 731.
- 3 Hobsbawm 1983, introduction. For a critical assessment of Hobsbawm's work, positing a distinction between genuine and spurious traditions, see Handler and Linnekin 1984; Glassie 1995, 395. Also see Gailey 1989 for definitions of tradition. For discussions that highlight the sense of continuity and personal connection with the past, see McDonald 1997.
- 4 Scheid 2007, 9.
- 5 Lloyd and Sivin 2003, 24; Sivin 1995, 195.
- 6 On initiation in early China, see Sivin 1995; Yamada 2003, 413–38.
- 7 *Hanshu* 30.1701; Okanishi 1958, 905; cf. Lo and Li 2010, 368.
- 8 *Zhangjiashan Han mu zhujian*, “Yin shu,” 171.
- 9 See, for example, Ma Jixing 1992, 867.
- 10 This title is traditionally rendered as *Records of the Grand Historian* or *Records of the Historian*. Readers should note that there was no office of history in Han (as there was in Tang, after 823 CE).
- 11 *Shiji* 105.2785.
- 12 *Shiji* 105.2788.
- 13 Compare the version of the story about Bian Que's diagnosis of Lord Huan in *Shiji* 105.2793 with *Han Feizi* 7/21.161 (“Yulao” chapter). The former refers to Lord Huan as the ruler of Cai,

whereas the latter makes him ruler of Qi. The postface to the *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders* follows the later version; on this, see Duan et al. 1987, 220 (“Shanghan lun xu”).

- 14 Hsu 2010, esp. 50, 52–58, 60.
- 15 Jin Shiqi 2010, 92, 214, 221, 228, 261, 271–73.
- 16 *Shiji* 105.2794.
- 17 Harper 1998, 60–62.
- 18 *Zhangjiashan Han mu zhujian*, “Maishu,” 126; Ma Jixing 1992, 292.
- 19 For the last six items, see, for example, *Huangdi neijing suwen yijie*, 20.105.
- 20 *Shuowen jiezi zhu*, 14.750.
- 21 See *Shisanjing zhushu: Fu jiaokan*, 5/666–67; cf. Zhouli in *Duanju shisanjing jingwen*, 7 (“Tian-shi,” “Shiyi,” “Jiyi”). For discussion of these sources, see Zhou Yimou 1994, 75.
- 22 Luo Fuyi 1978, 7/20; cf. Chen Zhi 1988, 288, 292.
- 23 See the cases of Chunyu Yan (91–41 BCE), who was referred to as *ruyi* (*Hanshu* 68.2952) and Yi Xu (fl. 109 BCE), who is said to have “performed medical duties” (*yi*) for the Empress Dowager Wang (*Shiji* 122.3144; *Hanshu* 90.3652).
- 24 Three different redactions of the *Huangdi neijing* survive: the *Suwen* (*Basic Questions*), the *Taisu* (*Great Simplicity*), and the *Lingshu* (*Divine Plot*). Scholarly opinion is most divided over the dating of the *Suwen*. Although some scholars date the compilation to the late first century BCE or the early first century CE, others argue that the text achieved its final form only in the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE), with the arrangement and commentary by Wang Bing. Several *pian*, 9, 66–71, and 74 (which treat “phase energetics”) are generally thought to represent Wang Bing’s additions.

Nathan Sivin agrees that the present form of the *Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic* owes much to Wang’s efforts, but he nevertheless holds that the content of the text has changed little since late Western or early Eastern Han; because of its canonical status, the text was subsequently rearranged, rather than rewritten, several times. For an overview of the controversies surrounding the date of the *Suwen*, see Sivin 1993; Keegan 1988. For an alternative view of the *Huangdi neijing* maintaining that the *Taisu* redaction is the closest to the “original form,” see Unschuld 2003, 22–58.
- 25 *Huangdi neijing suwen yijie* 75.670, 75.671.
- 26 For previous discussion of this passage, see Hanson 2011, 31.
- 27 *Huangdi neijing suwen yijie*, 12.107.
- 28 For the textual history of the postface of the *Shanghan lun*, see the appendix in Brown, forthcoming.
- 29 Duan et al. 1987, 220 (“Shanghan lun xu”).
- 30 Ibid., 226 (“Maijing xu”).
- 31 Ibid., 229 (“Jiayi jing xu”).
- 32 Ibid., 220 (“Shanghan lun xu”).
- 33 Ibid., 226 (“Maijing xu”).
- 34 Ibid., 226 (“Maijing xu”).
- 35 Ibid., 229 (“Jiayi jing xu”).
- 36 *Sanguo zhi*, 29.799, 29.804; *Baopuzi* 5.102. These contemporaries recalled with amazement Hua Tuo’s ability to teach his disciples the pulling or gymnastic techniques that enabled them to reach several hundred years of age.
- 37 *Wangshi Maijing*, 4.2/6; Li Jianmin 2007, 469–70. Cf. Li Jianmin 1995, 109–10; Li Jianmin 2009, 1123–32.
- 38 Hsu 2010, 50, 52–58, 60.
- 39 See Brown 2012, 1–24.

- 40 Bian Que's story about Lord Huan can be traced back to *Han Feizi* 7/21.161 ("Yulao" chapter). On this point see Brown forthcoming, chap. 2.
- 41 Many scholars believe that Sima Qian invented the notion of authorship. However, the mode of authorship ascribed to Sima was expanded upon and popularized by Yang Xiong. On this point, see Nylan 2011b, 59–61; cf. Taniguchi 2010, 22–39. For the emergence of postfaces at the end of Han, see Uchiyama 2001.
- 42 On this point, see Michael Loewe's chapter 8 in this volume.
- 43 Nylan 2000, 240n29. Cf. Klein 2010, 437, 440; Hulsewé 1975, 87.
- 44 Nylan 2011b, 22, 36, 114–16, citing *Hanshu* 80.3324–25.
- 45 Nylan 2011b, 53.
- 46 Sivin 1995, 187.
- 47 Sivin 1998, 750; Epler 1977, 231. For the social profiles of the *yi* in Han, see Jin Shiqi 2005.
- 48 For a court medic, see the case of Anqiu Wangzhi, in *Hou Hanshu* 29.703. For the county officials, see the case of Zhang Zu in *Sanguo zhi*, 29.800. For the frontier references to *yaoyigong*, in unpublished administrative strips from the northwest, see Xie Guihua 2005, 98. For one master who only initiated others, see the case of Yang Qing, master to Chunyu Yi, who was described by Huangfu Mi as *yi*; Duan et al. 1987, 229 ("Jiayi jing xu"). Huangfu Mi, who also appears not to have trained under a master healer, who was referred to as a *yi*. On this point, see the Dunhuang manuscript, "Bencao jing jizhu, jiaben" in *Dunhuang guyi jishi*, 346.
- 49 Nylan 2011b, 114–15.
- 50 See Brown, forthcoming, chap. 2.
- 51 Nylan 2011b, 34–40, 74, 107.
- 52 Duan et al. 1987, 220 ("Shanghan lun xu").
- 53 Ibid., 226 ("Maijing xu").
- 54 On Huangfu Mi's broad range of intellectual activities, see Declercq 1998, 167–70.
- 55 Duan et al. 1987, 229 ("Jiayi jing xu").
- 56 For the first view, see the contribution by Hans van Ess in this volume; for the second, see Nylan's introduction to this volume.
- 57 Nylan 2011b, 40–45.
- 58 Ibid., 22.
- 59 *Qilüe Bielu yiwen*, *Qilüe yiwen*, 184–85 (Deng Junjie 2008).
- 60 Jin Shiqi 2010, 158.
- 61 *Hanshu* 24B.1181.
- 62 *Qilüe Bielu yiwen*, *Qilüe yiwen*, 107 (Deng Junjie 2008).
- 63 Ibid., 106–7; *Hanshu* 30.1778.
- 64 *Qilüe Bielu yiwen*, *Qilüe yiwen*, 106 (Deng Junjie 2008); *Hanshu* 30.1776.
- 65 *Qilüe Bielu yiwen*, *Qilüe yiwen*, 106–7 (Deng Junjie 2008); *Hanshu* 30.1780.
- 66 See Brown 2012, 20.
- 67 Duan et al. 1987, 229 ("Jiayi jing xu").
- 68 Lloyd and Sivin 2003, 24.
- 69 For this fragment from the *Wenyuan yinghua*, see Okanishi 1958, 96–97.
- 70 For attacks on and defense of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in the twentieth century, see Croizier 1968; Lei 1999, 2002. For efforts to write new histories of TCM, see Brown 2012, 22–24; Lei 2009; Scheid 2007.
- 71 For one early example, see T'ao 1953, 1940. For other representative accounts, see Chen Bangxian 1937; Chen and Yan 1956; also Wang and Wu 1932. For a very recent account produced in the same vein, see Liao Yuqun 2006, 102–17.
- 72 Von Staden 1999c, 145.

- 73 Ibid., 144.
- 74 Von Staden 1999a, 294.
- 75 See Nutton 2004, 130.
- 76 Von Staden 1999b.

The Social Roles of the *Annals* Classic in Late Western Han

Mark Csikszentmihalyi 齊思敏

THE SO-CALLED CONFUCIAN CLASSICS HAVE GONE THROUGH MANY DIFFERENT phases of reception, and in each a mixture of the political and scholastic concerns of the day have shaped how the texts were read. Han dynasty readings of the *Annals* (*Chunqiu*) ascribed to Kongzi (a.k.a. Confucius) are a perfect illustration of this observation, because the text's authority was invoked by different kinds of actors on a number of different stages. Yet there are also several senses in which the *Annals* played a unique and uniquely important role during the period. The complex cultural and political factors that led to the rise and fall of the popularity and official status of several early commentaries to the *Annals*, the production of a variety of *Annals*-related texts, and the application of these texts in important realms such as law and portent interpretation require a fine-grained approach to fully appreciate the *Annals*' impact on Han China.

Like the *Changes* (*Yi*), the *Annals* classic is a relatively brief, stylistically formulaic work around which grew a library of related works that acquired their authority from their connection to that classic. Three texts—the *Zuo*, *Guliang*, and *Gongyang* traditions or “commentaries”—are by far the best known of these works. All three are now considered commentaries, insofar as they are divided into sections, each of which is linked to a particular entry of the terse chronicle *Annals*.¹ In mapping out scholarly lineages, Tang Yan (1857–1920 CE) further subdivided the *Gongyang* school of interpretation into several Han lineages: those of Huwu Sheng (a.k.a. Master Huwu, fl. 156–140 BCE) and Dong Zhongshu (ca. 179–104 BCE), Yan Pengzu (fl. ca. 74–49 BCE), Yan Anle

(fl. ca. 74–49 BCE), and members of “unspecified lineages.”² Notably, the “Bibliographical Treatise” of the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) lists two other texts of the same length alongside the *Gongyang*, *Guliang*, and *Zuo*: the commentarial traditions of Zou and Jia.³ Of course, the association of these commentaries with different people does not necessarily mean that they all represented radically different traditions. Arguably, the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries were developed in response to or in conjunction with a common set of interpretive questions, and it seems that the Yan Pengzu and Yan Anle lineages were branches of the *Gongyang* tradition that defined themselves in response to particular historical imperatives.

An important lesson that readers in Western and Eastern Han appear to have taken from the *Annals* is that it contained the hidden principles of Kongzi’s blueprint for ideal rulership, and that these principles could be revealed through careful examination of the text’s vocabulary for praise and blame. An important corollary deemed the *Annals* corpus the locus classicus for a symbol system used in reading phenomena as portents in Han, the vocabulary of which was a focus of some Western Han *Gongyang* exegetes.

This chapter examines the status of the *Annals* classic and the social roles played by the major commentaries to the text, especially the *Guliang* and *Gongyang* traditions. It argues that the *Annals* became an emblem in factional disputes over the status of different texts and that the competition between different commentaries represented different approaches to politics and administration within the reformist faction. In the late first century BCE, several commentaries vied for ascendancy, based on endorsements by officials, rival claims to closer connection to Kongzi, or superior efficacy in diagnostic and predictive practices. One result of this competition was that it cemented an exceptional or even sacred dimension of the *Annals*’ authority through continuous reinforcement of its status as a main determinant of success in areas such as governance, omen interpretation, and claims to political authority.

The Rise of Western Han *Annals* Texts: *Gongyang* and *Guliang*

The rapid rise in status of the *Annals* commentaries near the end of the second century BCE demonstrates the degree to which Western Han scholastic history coincides with political history. An incipient “reformist” faction—using Michael Loewe’s distinction between Western Han reformists and modernists—had begun to reject Qin administrative models.⁴ According to the telling of Ban Gu’s *Hanshu*, a reformist faction led by Wei Wan (d. 130 BCE), who served Wudi as Chancellor from 143 to 140 BCE, proposed narrowing the pool of candidates for office by eliminating from consideration those whose expertise was in Legalist or Vertical and Horizontal Alliance methods.⁵ Among others, Wei Wan shared common interests with Liu De, King of Hejian, ruler of a northern principality from 155 BCE until his death in 129 BCE,⁶ who reportedly created a library that included works on rituals, music, and architecture characteristic of the Zhou dynasty administration.

These figures were active at the same time that the reinstitution of Zhou conventions was being promoted as a means to institute an age of “Great Peace,” a gambit that swiftly brought reprisals from Empress Dou and her faction in 139 BCE.⁷ Just a few years later, however, a youngish Han Wudi asked for policy advice with the proviso, “Answer me completely, using the *Annals*, not [the sayings of] Su Qin and the Vertical and Horizontal Alliances.”⁸ The struggle between these two court administrators’ political factions partly concerned the sphere of admissible textual citation, and eventually their struggles in the late second century BCE seem to have turned the tide in favor of the *Annals*.

The ascension to high government positions of multiple *Gongyang* experts in the *Annals* during the reign of Wudi also had a strong political dimension. In 149 BCE, a decade before the failure of Wei Wan’s initial efforts, Huwu Sheng and his student Dong Zhongshu had been appointed Academicians. Another student of Huwu, named Gongsun Hong, held the office of Chancellor under Emperor Wu from 124 to his death in 121 BCE. According to Ban Gu, both Dong Zhongshu and Gongsun Hong employed the *Gongyang* commentary to the *Annals* extensively in judicial and administrative contexts.⁹ In 123 BCE, while Gongsun Hong was still Chancellor, Dong Zhongshu’s performance in debate with a *Guliang Annals* exegete named Xiaqiu Jianggong led Wudi to favor the *Gongyang* over the *Guliang* interpretations: “For this reason, from this point forward, the Emperor revered the *Gongyang* experts, and he issued an edict that the crown prince be trained in *Gongyang* studies. Owing to this, the *Gongyang* tradition flourished.”¹⁰ Since most post-*Gushi bian* (*Debates about Antiquity*) scholars hold that the *Guliang* commentary was constructed with knowledge of the *Gongyang* commentary,¹¹ this implies that the *Gongyang* text was compiled between 149 and 123 BCE, when that momentous debate took place.

The *Gongyang* commentary in late Western Han was once compared by Hsü Fu-kuan to a state constitution.¹² Yet the success of the reformist faction that adopted it prompts the question of why it appealed to members of that faction. One reason may be that the aristocratic values of the *Annals* ascribed to the Chunqiu period were more attuned to the evolving agenda of the Western Han empire, fifty years or so after unification and centralization of power, than some other works inherited from the late Zhanguo period. It has been argued that a central appeal of the *Gongyang* commentary for Wudi and his court was the tradition’s justification of military expansionism, and that it was championed after Wudi’s death by the allies of the “princeling” Liu Ju.¹³ Others ascribed the courtly appeal of the *Gongyang* commentary to its attention to the concept of “yielding,” which tended to reinforce imperial authority.¹⁴

Still, there was also a period after Emperor Wu in Western Han when the champions of the *Gongyang* were eclipsed in imperial favor by those in the *Guliang* commentarial tradition. Chen Suzhen argues that the *Guliang* was associated with political figures expert in Lu ritual traditions, while *Gongyang* exegetes promoted the “transformation of the people by the ruler’s virtue.”¹⁵ Other scholars stress that Emperor Xuan

(74–49 BCE) already favored the *Guliang*'s emphasis on hierarchical relationships.¹⁶ But certainly by the 51 BCE conference on classical scholarship that took place at the Stone Canal Pavilion, the *Guliang* tradition had received official recognition from the throne, and Academicians were appointed for it.

While the *Guliang* and *Gongyang* traditions share many formal similarities, the *Guliang*'s brief ascendancy may have been partly due to some of its differences with the *Gongyang*. *Guliang* proponent Zhong Wenzhen (1818–1877 CE) argued that the commentary specialized in emphasizing hierarchical relationships like ruler/minister, father/son, elder/younger brother, and husband/wife, combining them with Kongzi's tenets of valuing ritual, so as to de-emphasize military power, privilege the Chinese, and exteriorize the non-Chinese.¹⁷ A modern study similarly claims that the chief effect of the *Guliang* commentary during Han was to reinforce social hierarchies, as the *Guliang* is chiefly concerned with the importance of ritual code, of political and familial hierarchies, and of hereditary succession.¹⁸ Perhaps the *Guliang*'s particular emphasis on parallel hierarchies in both family and politics was particularly important in times when the power of imperial consort families was increasing. Of course, while it is common to assume an ideological explanation, the political dimension of changing court patronage might also explain the brief challenge to *Gongyang* ascendancy.

Despite their slightly different emphases, both the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries arguably had more commonalities than differences.¹⁹ Both reinforced imperial authority and underscored the relevance of the Zhou-dynasty institutions to contemporary times. Because Western Han had many succession issues, looking back to Western Zhou provided an opportunity to authorize both obedience to the center and a single, unambiguous model of imperial succession.²⁰

The Expanding *Annals* Corpus

The *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries to the *Annals* were not the only *Annals* texts that became popular in Western Han. Two such works ascribed to Dong Zhongshu are the *Chunqiu fanlu* (*Elegant Crown for the Annals*)²¹ and the *Chunqiu jueyu* (*Deciding Cases with the Annals*), though large parts of the *Elegant Crown* are now known to date to the Nanbeichao period, after Eastern Han. The first seventeen chapters of the *Elegant Crown* are *Annals* exegesis, which Joachim Gentz divides into three sections. The first section, chapters 1–9, “operates on a much more abstract and explicit level and is even more rigorous in its methodological skepticism than the *Gongyang* . . . [as it] introduces political and religious concepts.”²² According to Gentz, the second section, chapters 10–12, reflects “something like the formal dogmatization of *Annals* exegesis and at the same time introduce[s] metaphysical concepts . . . and connect[s] these to the concept of *tian* or Heaven.” Finally, chapters 13–17 are a “heterogeneous collection of fragmentary material,” with a postface emphasizing the *Annals*' transmission of the virtues of Yao and Shun, legendary sage-kings of antiquity.

More recently, Michael Loewe has raised a similar possibility, that “the most original version of the [*Elegant Crown*] consisted of ten *juan* and that this may have started as an assembly of some of Dong’s own writings to which other essays were attached.”²³ While Gentz posits that the first seventeen *pian* (i.e., chapters) are “the earliest and probably the most authentic part” of the text, Loewe’s more guarded hypothesis privileges the first ten *juan* (i.e., bundles of chapters, here comprising thirty-eight *pian*) as “deriving from one of the earlier versions” of the work that was in circulation during Song.²⁴ The *Deciding Cases* (whose ascription few scholars call into question) consists of applications of the *Gongyang* exegesis to legal cases, often, as Sarah Queen notes, citing “a judgment from the *Annals* to support his [Dong’s] views.”²⁵

Besides Dong Zhongshu’s guide to using *Annals* judgments to decide legal cases, several other types of text were associated with the *Annals*. The “Bibliographical Treatise” of the *Hanshu* lists four “underlying essentials” (*wei*), two “outer transmissions” (*waizhuan*), two “chapter and verse” (*zhangju*) commentaries, and two “records” (*ji*). The list of underlying essentials includes the *Duoshi wei* (*Underlying Essentials of Mr. Duo*) ascribed to Duo Jiao, tutor of King Wei of Chu around 335 BCE, supposedly compiled for a ruler who could not penetrate the language of the *Annals*.²⁶ The paired works called the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* outer transmissions were perhaps formally similar to the early Western Han compilation entitled *Han Shi waizhuan* (*Han’s Outer Transmission of the Odes*), although an Eastern Han text in twelve *pian*, ascribed to Yang Zhong (d. 100 CE), uses “outer transmission” in its title and is described as having “altered and fixed 150,000 words of the chapter and verse” *Annals* commentary.²⁷ The chapter and verse commentaries probably contained semantic and phonetic glosses, as well as variant readings.

Finally, the *Gongyang zaji* (*Miscellaneous Records on the Gongyang*) and *Gongyang Yanshi ji* (*Mr. Yan’s Records on the Gongyang*) were likely collections of exegetical notes on the *Gongyang*, with the latter based on the teachings of Yan Anle. Separate from these listings in the *Annals* subsection of the *Hanshu*’s “Bibliographical Treatise,” the classicist subsection contains the *Yushi chungiu* (*Mr. Yu’s Annals*) in fifteen chapters, attributed to the third-century BCE Chancellor of Zhao, Yu Qing, who “looking up, selected from the *Annals*, and looking down observed the recent state of play” in order to compile his work.²⁸ This description makes it sound like a set of principles derived from the *Annals* applied to a particular set of concrete circumstances, perhaps not unlike Dong Zhongshu’s famous work on jurisprudence.²⁹

While not the entirety of *Annals*-related texts in the Western Han, the above titles point to the diversity of works associated with the classic. By late Western Han and through Eastern Han (25–220 CE), there were arguably no works as important in the realms of politics and law as the *Annals* and its associated corpus. It was a mainstay of classical learning and portent interpretation, areas closely linked to the political world. Yet debates continued about how to apply the terse lessons of the *Annals*, and different readings of these lessons competed for popular and imperial sanction.

The legal and administrative applications of the *Annals* in such works as *Deciding Cases with the Annals* or *Mr. Yu's Annals* hardly exhaust the political uses of the text. Of the various kinds of interpretation used during Han, perhaps that of catastrophes and anomalies (*zaiyi*) was most dominant during the first century BCE. Sixteen instances of disasters in the *Annals* are specifically identified as catastrophes (*zai*) in the *Gongyang* commentary, the largest group being seven fires, and the *Gongyang* identifies a further thirty-three anomalies (*yi*), from eclipses to earthquakes.³⁰ There is some overlap between the kinds of events classified as catastrophe and anomaly,³¹ as when the *Gongyang* commentary on the destruction of the temple of Yibo, attached to Lord Xi's Year 15, calls the earthquake both a warning from *tian* and an anomaly. Despite the signal importance attached to typology in the *Gongyang* commentary, the text does not always describe events that are clearly omens or portents using either term.

While the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries do not always clearly explain appearances in the *Annals* of more general "sign" phenomena, numerous passages in the two commentaries adduce evidence to illustrate general rules concerning patterns of interaction between the cosmic and social realms (*tian* and *ren*), or the categories of yin and yang.³² Hence the *Gongyang* reading of a report of a plague of locust larvae in the winter of Lord Xuan's Year 15: "Previously, there was no record of the birth of locust larvae. Since births of locust larvae were not written down, why was it written down in this instance? To show it was fortunate. What was fortunate about it? It is basically saying that the event was accepted." In the normal catechistic format of the *Gongyang* commentary, this entry argues, somewhat counterintuitively, that the appearance of larval locusts was a fortunate thing.

The *Gongyang* follows an approach similar to the *Zuo* commentary, which notes, after the classic's reference to the larvae, "In winter, locust larvae were born, and there was famine; this is seen as fortunate."³³ The rationale for this assertion is left unexplained in the text itself, confusing authorities like James Legge ("I cannot understand the note of the *Tso-she* on these paragraphs") and Yang Bojun, who says this passage "is truly inexplicable!"³⁴ Both writers also stress the incoherence of the Du Yu (222–284 CE) commentary, which insists that because the larvae were killed by the frost before they could do any harm, the outcome was fortunate.³⁵

The *Gongyang* commentary, however, differs from the *Zuo* commentary in two ways. First, it comments on the text just prior to the character *ji* (famine), thereby softening the jarring juxtaposition inherent in calling a famine fortunate. It goes on to explain its understanding of the judgment: "The ruler [i.e., Lord Xuan] had changed and revised the old and constant ways, and in response to this came a *tian*-sent catastrophe. Owing to this, it was seen as proper to this particular change."³⁶ According to the *Gongyang* text, in Du Yu's reading, the larval plague was seen as an *incipient* change that was caught in time by the ruler, and hence as worth recording as a *tian*-sent advisory that was heeded. Although it threatened harm in the short term, it led to a reversal of a

harmful state policy, and thus the net result could be positive. Another way to read this passage is as an admission that any change in policy results in a sign. While this sign has a negative impact, it also confirms that a needed change has taken place. Both of these rather casuistic readings confirm that the challenge of systematizing historical records in the *Annals* corpus allowed prospective interpretation of new events in the present.

The writings associated with particular *Gongyang* writers in Western and Eastern Han also engage in this sort of interpretation of events. A passage in the *Elegant Crown* quotes this same passage from the *Gongyang* and even adds a statement by Kongzi to back it up:

Therefore one who perceives *tian*'s intent in catastrophes and anomalies will be in awe of them yet not abhor them, thinking, "*Tian* desires to strike our errors, and save us from our mistakes, so this is its response." The pattern of the *Annals* is that "if the ruler changes and revises the old and constant ways, in response to this will come a *tian*-sent catastrophe," and this is called fortunate for the state. Kongzi said, "When *tian* treats someone fortunately, there are things he does wrong but through repetition over time he will reach the optimal state."³⁷

As with the previous example of a "fortunate" famine, in this passage there is a clear attempt to argue that positive and negative portents are in some sense both potentially *fortunate*, perhaps as a means to reduce the threat of negative portents to those in authority. In a similar vein, writing about this *Gongyang* passage, He Xiu (129–182 CE) explained that in response to the catastrophe, Lord Xuan changed his incorrect policies the next year; so, despite the famine, bountiful harvests eventually followed, which meant that the overall benefit of this change was better than if there had been no catastrophe at all.³⁸ The consistent view appears to be that *tian* responds to poor policy through disasters because the ultimate positive effect of a reversal in bad administrative policies can outweigh the initial negative effect of the disaster.

By contrast, the *Guliang* view of the *Annals* passage about the locusts is notably different. The *Guliang* commentary says, "The locust larvae were not the disaster. It says 'locust larvae,' in order to deny that the disaster was caused by the [early] agricultural tax."³⁹ The Eastern Jin writer Fan Ning (339–401 CE), in the *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan jijie* (*Collected Explanations of the Guliang Tradition of the Annals*), argues that the actual disaster was the change in tax policy, and he goes so far as to read *yuan* 緣 ("owing to" the tax policy) in place of *yuan* 蜚 (locust larvae).⁴⁰ Noting this difference, Rao Shangkuan has argued that this is an example of the *Guliang* text directly rebutting the *Gongyang* interpretation,⁴¹ insofar as the *Guliang* approach denies that the locusts were a sign from *tian*.

By the end of Western Han, at Chengdi's court, Liu Xin (d. 23 CE) and his allies were systematizing such *Annals* interpretations in order to develop a vocabulary of "signs."

Liu Xin's interpretation of the passage integrates it into a Five Phases typology. Specifically, Liu Xin classifies the signs as a portent associated with the color black and the Water Phase. The *Hanshu* records state: "Liu Xin took *yuan* to be the winged maggots and moths that eat grains and create disasters, and so named these 'black offences.'"⁴² Nearly two centuries after Liu Xin, late in Eastern Han, Lu Kang (126–195 CE) cited the foregoing interpretation in a memorial opposing Lingdi's proposed tax to cast a bronze statue.⁴³ This example shows how well the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries, despite their occasional disagreements, were integrated into the thriving system of omens and portents recorded and encoded in the *Annals*.

Commentaries of Yan Pengzu, Yan Anle, and Zuo Qiuming: Political Valences

In late Western Han, *Annals* interpretation centered on the close study of writing conventions thought to reveal the intentions of Kongzi, supposed compiler of the *Annals*. For example, the Five Beginnings theory analyzed the possible import attached to the standard first phrases in *Annals* entries—for example, "In the spring" and "In the first month." Other powerful analytic schemes described the particular characteristics to be assigned to each of the Three Ages correlated with Kongzi's differing degree of closeness to the figures in successive strata of the *Annals*; also the conventional formulae thought to reflect the inner/outer distinction, in which the Lu vassal lords from Kongzi's home state are relatively "inner" compared with the rest of the Zhou polity, and the Central States tied to inheritance and marriage to the Zhou royal family are more "inner" than the surrounding polities. Many passages were also said to illustrate the general rules concerning patterns of interaction between the realms of society and the cosmos, or the categories of yin and yang.

Beyond the utility of such specific interpretative methods, mastery of *Annals* commentaries had immense social and political importance. Such mastery qualified a man for an official post and qualified him to speak about the kinds of portents and prophecies described above. That said, while early interpretations of the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* seemed to effectively authorize the emperor and to reinforce social hierarchies, so potent was *Annals* expertise that it could be perceived as a threat to the ruling line. A well-known example is the *Annals* interpretation offered by Sui Meng (also known as Sui Hong) for a set of omens in 78 BCE, which shows how Western Han *Gongyang* experts applied the *Annals*.

According to one account, after the disembodied voices of thousands of people were heard south of a sacred mountain, a stone stood up by itself, as did a fallen willow in the imperial preserve. A dead tree at a shrine dedicated to the earth god came also back to life, and insects ate words into a leaf, with the message that Gongsun Bingyi would ascend. Sui Meng interpreted the signs according to the *Annals* as follows: "Since stones and willows are in the yin category, they represent the common people, and the Daizong [sacred] peak at Taishan is the place where the true king [announces a] change

to the ruling line and declares a new dynasty.”⁴⁴ Although there are several different versions of this story, in this one Sui’s analysis was accompanied by a memorial that spelled out even more explicitly his claim that the Han imperial house, as descendants of the sage-king Yao, needed to alter its succession in response to this expression of Mandate or Decree issued by *tian*. For his interpretation, Sui was condemned as a traitor and promptly executed, although one *Hanshu* version of the story clearly accepts this as a loyal portent merely predicting the future enthronement of Xuandi.⁴⁵

Application of the classics to portent readings was hardly limited to the *Annals*, given the extent to which portent readings became a preoccupation of the court classicists. According to the *Hanshu*, a few decades after Sui Meng’s reading, the renowned *Changes* expert Jing Fang (77–37 BCE) focused his own reading of the 78 BCE events on entirely different aspects (e.g., whether the stone standing on a mountain or a plain predicts the rise of someone with the same surname or a different surname), so as to skirt the issue of dynastic change.⁴⁶ And a few centuries after Sui Meng, late Eastern Han exegete Xun Yue (148–209 CE), by contrast, put more store in distinguishing between anomalies having to do with “spirit and form” (e.g., great stones that stand by themselves) and anomalies having to do with the “*qi* (vital energies) contained within” (e.g., men changing into women).⁴⁷ This example shows that even in Han there were different systems of interpreting the signs in the *Annals*; it is also clear that the *Annals* was one of two classics central to omen interpretation, alongside the *Changes*.⁴⁸

While Sui Meng’s students Yan Pengzu and Yan Anle were not blamed for Sui’s crime, Chengdi’s reign witnessed a similar incident involving Gan Zhongke and subsequently Gan’s student Xia Heliang. Tradition credits Gan Zhongke with writing the *Tianguanli* (*Heavenly Officers’ Calendar*) and the *Baoyuan Taipingjing* (*Classic of Preserving the Prime and Great Peace*); also with this prediction: “The Han ruling house will meet with the great ending of Heaven and Earth [the cosmos] and ought once again to renew its allotment from *tian*. The Emperor of *tian* will send down his emissary Master Red Essence to teach us this Way.”⁴⁹

The predictions by Sui Meng and Gan Zhongke were hardly the only ones of this kind, with such political predictions becoming more common as the dynasty continued. Naturally enough, such dire prophecies were championed by most pretenders to the throne. In 5 BCE, during the reign of Chengdi’s successor, Aidi, Xia Heliang’s interpretations of omens led to a change in the name of the reign period to Great Beginning, at which point “Gan Zhongke and Xia Heliang’s prophetic books were added to the Orchid Pavilion palace collection.”⁵⁰

In Chengdi’s time, however, the *Annals* in general and the *Gongyang* commentary in particular were becoming eclipsed by other works more closely ascribed to the Western Zhou period and less associated with treason trials. Chengdi’s disregard for the *Annals* presents a striking contrast to his predecessors. In the imperial edicts recorded in the *Basic Annals* of the *Hanshu*, the *Documents* classic (*Shangshu*) is quoted five times, the *Analects* (*Lunyu*) twice, the *Odes* (*Shi*) once, and the *Annals* not at all. Omens and por-

tents are still analyzed in terms of yin-yang imbalances caused by the moral failings of the ruler, but it is the *Documents* that is cited for classical precedents. Among Chengdi's officials, only Zhai Fangjin, who served as Chancellor from 15 BCE until his death in 7 BCE, was trained in an *Annals* commentarial tradition of *Guliang*. Zhai is perhaps better known as a proponent of the *Zuozhuan* written in Archaic Script, which he studied with Liu Xin early on.⁵¹ Still, Zhai's predecessor as Chancellor, Xue Xuan, twice refers to general principles of the *Annals* in legal contexts: "The meaning of the *Annals* is that one has to dig deeply into the mind's intention in order to establish guilt."⁵² This suggests that the *Annals* continued to be relevant in many of the same social contexts as in the previous century, even if its political stature had declined.

Considering the general orientations of most *Gongyang* scholars and their propensity to make claims about political legitimacy, it is easy to understand why the *Documents* might seem the safer "codebook" for omen interpretation, rather than the *Gongyang* version of the *Annals*. The use of the *Annals* as codebook seems to go back at least to the time of Sui Meng's teacher, Dong Zhongshu, who wrote,

Your majesty has expressed yourself in such virtuous tones, and issued a great edict, seeking to find out about Heaven's Mandate, but dispositions and nature are all things above my pay grade. I have carefully investigated the *Annals*, examined the matters already completed by previous generations, all in order to observe the boundaries of the mutual interplay between *tian* and human beings—something that is truly awesome. When a state is about to fail due to its loss of the Way, *tian* will first condemn and warn it by sending catastrophes. If the state does not understand and curb itself, it will again send strange and anomalous things in order to create a shock. If it still does not understand and change, then the defeating injury will arrive. In this way, we see that *tian*'s intention is for the ruler of the people and desires to stop the disorder.⁵³

Not surprisingly, perhaps, Sui Meng's memorial explicitly cites Dong Zhongshu as the source of his contention that a person named Gongsun would supplant the Han house.⁵⁴ Likewise Sui's nephew Yan Anle and his student Yan Pengzu appear to have also continued the common *Gongyang* exegetical view that Heaven's Mandate was the key to political legitimacy, something that may have been potentially threatening to any Liu heir—although the complex political dynamics of Chengdi's reign and Chengdi's relationship to the Wang clan cast doubt on such simple causal explanations. Nevertheless, both Liu Xin's attempt to categorize and hence control the classic omen literature and the court's shift of preference from the *Guliang* to *Zuo* traditions, signified by the choice of Liu Xin's student Zhai Fangjin, could be explained in this way.

Following Chengdi, however, the *Annals* regained some of its former political stature. Since Yan Pengzu and Yan Anle had been Academicians under Xuandi, their students were likely active under the final emperors of Western Han. While the direct

students of the two Yans were not notably successful under Chengdi, long-standing traditions hold that members of Yan Anle's scholastic lineage were particularly successful during Wang Mang's Xin dynasty (9–23 CE) some decades later. According to the *Hanshu* chapter dedicated to the classicists, Sui Meng's nephew Yan Anle taught Ling Feng, Ren Gong, Ming Du, and Guan Lu. In 3 BCE Guan Lu's student Sun Bao was promoted to a ministerial post as Commissioner of Agriculture, while in 1 BCE Ling Feng's student Ma Gong also became Chancellor (Da Situ). Meanwhile, in the same year, Zuo Xian reached ministerial rank as Commissioner of State Visits.⁵⁵ In addition, Ma Gong became one of the “four tutors” of the crown prince under Wang Mang, while Zuo Xian was appointed as an *Annals* lecturer, one of only six lecturers on all the classics.⁵⁶ Ma's appointment was no doubt helped by his willingness to flatter the ruler Wang Mang: “The Chancellor Ma Gong and others all praised [Wang] Mang's virtue as being comparable with that of the Duke of Zhou.”⁵⁷

By contrast, the students of Yan Pengzu's interpretations were most powerful during the reign of the Eastern Han founder Guangwu (r. 25–57 CE),⁵⁸ Ding Gong and Zhang Xuan being especially prominent. Ding was a teacher who became an Academician and rose to high office during the Jianwu period reign (25–56 CE) and taught thousands as a “great classicist.” Ding Gong taught Yan Pengzu's interpretation of the *Annals* to numerous future government officials. Zhang Xuan was enormously learned and mastered multiple interpretations of the *Annals*. In fact, according to the *Hou Hanshu*, “At the time, there was a dearth of Academicians for Yan Anle's interpretation. [Zhang] Xuan ranked first in the answering of questions so he was appointed Academician. He spent several months in that position but various scholars objected to the emperor that Xuan combined the interpretations of Yan Pengzu and Ming Du, so he was not suitable to serve as an Academician representing Yan Anle. Guangwu ordered that he return to the official bureau, and he had not yet been reassigned when he died.”⁵⁹ Two facts here are particularly interesting: first, that there was still a Yan Anle interpretive “chair,” despite the clear service of Yan Anle scholars in Wang Mang's regime; and second, that Zhang Xuan's use of other interpretations evidently disqualified him from holding the chair for Yan Anle.⁶⁰

Surviving fragments of the teachings associated with the two Yans support the idea that they were concerned with issues of political legitimacy, and these fragments have some points in common with the prophetic and apocryphal (*chenwei*) texts. Kong Yingda (574–648 CE) preserves a fragment of Yan Anle's explanation for an omission of a notation, which states, “For each of the twelve Lords of Lu, the state historians completely recorded their accession, but when Zhong Ni [i.e., Kongzi] revised their work, he [intentionally] made certain omissions.”⁶¹ Here Yan Anle uses the typical *Gongyang* method of ascribing supreme authorial intentionality to the *Annals* to argue that the omission of a phrase conveys Kongzi's moral judgment about the ruler. A single phrase in He Xiu's notes to his *Gongyang* subcommentary corroborates this picture; there He Xiu comments that some writers “take absence to be proof of presence” (*yi wu wei you*).⁶²

The Tang scholar Xu Yan glosses He Xiu's comment in this way: "Although the *Gongyang* classic and commentaries say nothing about the Zhou kings being 'the prisoners of *tian*,' however, the *Explanations for the Gongyang* and the followers of Yan [Pengzu] and Yan [Anle] took the Zhou kings to have been such prisoners."⁶³ The notion that the Zhou kings were *tian*'s prisoners clearly relates to some politically sensitive questions about imperial legitimacy. Unfortunately, given the relative dearth of extant quotations from the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* traditions, we cannot be sure what precise valence should be read into the foregoing remarks, despite their evident importance at different times in Western and Eastern Han.

Although the *Gongyang* interpretations of Sui Meng's students may have threatened the Western Han ruling house, during Eastern Han the *Gongyang* tradition continued to thrive. In the second century, He Xiu's (129–182 CE) *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhu* (*Commentary to the Gongyang Tradition of the Annals*), a subcommentary to the *Gongyang*, laid out the complex rules of *Gongyang* interpretation. He Xiu moreover applied *Gongyang* rules in his reading of some six hundred Han events in his *Chunqiu Han yi* (*Han Discussions of the Annals*),⁶⁴ after which he went on to compose a defense of the *Gongyang* traditions, the *Gongyang Mo shou* (*Mohist Defense of the Gongyang Tradition*), designed to make the tradition as "safe" from attack as if it were protected by Mozi's surefire defensive tactics.⁶⁵ (The immediate polemical response to He Xiu's work, however, by the exegete Zheng Xuan [127–200 CE], was called *Breaking through the Mohist Defense*).⁶⁶ A second Eastern Han *Gongyang* adherent, Li Yu (fl. 76 CE), closely examined certain aspects of the *Zuo* commentary that he thought had "failed to understand the deepest intentions of the Sage," in his work entitled *Nan Zuoshi yi* (*Objections to the Zuo Commentary*).⁶⁷

More loosely affiliated with the *Annals* are a set of apocryphal texts, fragments of which, under twenty-nine titles, have been collected by Yasui Kōzan and Nakamura Shōhachi, including the *Chunqiu yuanming bao* (*Original Allotment Guarantee of the Annals*). Only occasionally do these fragments refer to the title or content of the *Annals*; instead they display more general concerns with topics like astronomical portents and physical marks attesting the exceptionality of past sage-kings,⁶⁸ forging connections between these apocryphal texts and the political import ascribed to the *Gongyang* tradition for the *Annals*.

Another change was clearly taking place, however. The turn toward works like the *Analects*, said to preserve both Kongzi's legacy and the methods of Zhou administration, meant that the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* traditions were no longer seen as the primary resources for politics and policy making, if only because they were known to date from a much later period. Liu Xin gave this rationale to elevate the *Zuo Traditions* above the two other *Annals* commentaries in his letter to the Academicians: "Zuo Qiuming had the same likes and dislikes as the Sage, and he saw [the Sage] with his own eyes. But *Gongyang* and *Guliang* came after the seventy disciples. When you compare the transmitted retellings [of *Gongyang* and *Guliang*] to those of the person

who had seen [Kongzi] with his own eyes, the level of detail is not the same.”⁶⁹

This passage is particularly interesting in that it deploys a *Gongyang* dynamic to devalue the *Gongyang* itself. Specifically, it appeals to the hierarchy of value in the Three Ages typology from the *Gongyang* commentary that privileges the age in which Kongzi could “see” (*jian*) the political stage (during the reigns of three of the Lords of Lu, 541–479 BCE) over the age of “transmitted retelling” (*chuanwen*), that is, 722–609 BCE.⁷⁰ In the *Gongyang* scheme of the Three Ages, the degradation of information accounts for different conventions in different parts of the *Annals*. Here Liu Xin applies the same reasoning to explain why Zuo Qiuming’s take on Kongzi’s accounts is more reliable than those of later writers. Liu Xin’s demotion of the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* depends, of course, on his claims about the age of the “found” texts that he favored. But he apparently was committed to some of the same historiographical conventions as his opponents, lodging the interesting argument that the best commentaries are those written by the closest contemporaries of the author. (Today, of course, the *Zuozhuan* is generally viewed as the most important of the commentaries for entirely different reasons.)

Conclusion

During this transition period in the twilight of Western Han, the *Annals* was not only read as a set of court precedents that could be applied to current phenomena but also as a source for knowledge about the present that had been recorded in the distant past. As we have seen, the *Annals* classic and its chief commentaries were read both as encoded blueprints for the ideal administration and as guides to portents. Yet perhaps the most important impetus for some of the changes recorded above was the propensity for *Annals* interpreters to weigh in on matters of political legitimacy, while deploying their authority to back different claimants to the throne and high office. The number and variety of *Annals*-related texts that circulated during Han should then be seen both as a sign of the importance of classical exegesis and as evidence that the *Annals*’ authority was being exploited in various social contexts. While the *Annals* was not the only classic to be used this way, it played a significant part in late Western Han politics because of its role in key disputes about political authority.

Notes

- 1 Included in *Shisanjing zhushu* are the *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu*, and *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan zhushu*. The arrangement of the *Zuo* text interwoven with *Chunqiu* entries probably originated with Du Yu (222–284 CE).
- 2 Tang Yan’s preface is dated 1914. See Tang Yan 1986, 402–4. For sources of fragments of both texts, see Sun and Chen 1997, 60–61.
- 3 *Hanshu* 30.1713. A later reference to these two schools says that unlike the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* schools, Zou and Jia lacked crucial elements of school: “While *Gongyang* and *Guliang* were established as *xueguan* (local academy), Zou’s [interpretation] lacked teachers, and Jia’s

[interpretation] had no written record” (*Hanshu* 30.1715). Elsewhere in the *Hanshu* there is a reference to a similar title with the graph *zou* 騶; *Hanshu* 72.3066.

- 4 Loewe 1986a, 104–6.
- 5 Wei specifically advocated a ban on those who would use “the theories of Shen [Buhai], Shang [Yang], Han Fei, Su Qin, and Zhang Yi,” according to *Hanshu* 12.156. Note the qualification that these narratives depend on Ban Gu. Fukui 2005 makes the case that some of the portrayals of Western Han in the *Hanshu* were a retroprojection by Ban in order to “classicize” the reign of Wudi. Michael Loewe and Michael Nylan have accepted much of Fukui Shigemasu’s argument in their recent work.
- 6 Not to be confused with Liu Xiang’s father, who had the same name; Liu De is also discussed in Vankeerberghen’s chapter in this volume.
- 7 *Shiji* 70.2843. *Hanshu* 30.1709–10 lists the title of a work of Liu De’s recorded answers concerning the Ming Tang, and the construction of such a ritual building was supposedly at the heart of the conflict between the classicists’ faction and Empress Dou. The classicists’ faction also summoned a venerable expert in the *Odes*, Shen Gong, to advise on its construction. Empress Dou’s faction promoted a corpus associated with the Yellow Emperor and Laozi, as well as Han Feizi (see *Shiji* 63.2146). In this context, Chen Suzhen’s point that the concept of “Great Peace” was central to Qin claims about the efficacy of its own administrative practices in the late third century BCE dovetails with the revival of this term among exegetes at the time of Emperor Wu. See Chen Suzhen 2011, 11–13.
- 8 *Hanshu* 64.2789.
- 9 As early as 150 BCE, the *Gongyang* was used to solve issues of inheritance, and this shows that its influence in policy making was under way. See *Shiji* 58.2091; *Hanshu* 52.2375. An overview of the early uses of the commentary may be found in Zhang Duansui 2005, 2–13. Zhang argues that the tradition surrounding the *Chunqiu* was fixed by one Gongyang Shou and his disciples at this time. *Han Feizi*, chap. 34 (“Wai chushuo You Shang”), attests to the existence of an early belief that the original *zhuan* transmission traces back to Kongzi’s disciple Zixia, which likely explains Han and later ascriptions of Han *Chunqiu* commentaries to Zixia.
- 10 *Hanshu* 88.3617.
- 11 See, for example, Rao Shangkuan 2006, 368–84, esp. 370.
- 12 Hsü 1976, vol. 2, 357.
- 13 Chen Suzhen 2001, 222–83, outlines the development of *Gongyang* studies during Emperor Wu’s reign.
- 14 Zhang Duansui 2005, 9–13.
- 15 Chen Suzhen 2001, 321.
- 16 Rao Shangkuan 2006, 379.
- 17 Zhong Wenzhen’s *Chunqiu Guliang jingzhuan buzhu* was published with a preface dating to 1868. See Zhong Wenzhen 1996; Rao Shangkuan 2006, 371.
- 18 Wu Zhixiong 2000.
- 19 An interesting Han-period comment on the distinction between late first-century BCE *Gongyang* and *Guliang* experts notes that “the *Guliang* masters were originally Lu scholars and Master Gongyang was originally a Qi scholar” (*Hanshu* 88.3618). Qian Mu (1896–1978 CE) has argued that the Lu school interpretation of the *Odes* has much in common with the *Guliang* commentary. See Chen Suzhen 2011, 318n1.
- 20 Zhang Duansui 2005, 9–13.
- 21 For this translation, see Loewe 2011, 191–92.
- 22 Gentz 2009, esp. 823–24.
- 23 Loewe 2011, 222.
- 24 Gentz 2009, 824; Loewe 2011, 221.

- 25 Queen 1996, 138. For a fuller discussion, see Wallacker 1985; Arbuckle 1987. In the bibliographic chapter of the *Hanshu* the title of the text is *Gongyang Dong Zhongshu zhiyu* (*Hanshu* 30.1713). *Yu han shan fang ji yi shu* 1871–74 contains fragments of this work.
- 26 *Shiji* 14.510; *Hanshu* 30.1713.
- 27 *Hou Hanshu* 48.1601. The wording is unclear; either Yang Zhong’s work might have revised the commentary and comprised 150,000 words, or its revisions alone might have comprised that number of words.
- 28 Interestingly enough, by many definitions Yu Qing was not a Confucian, but he was most certainly someone with knowledge of past events (and so, a classicist).
- 29 *Shiji* 14.510; *Hanshu* 30.1726. For examples of the *Gongyang* commentary’s application to policy making, see *Hanshu* 52.2375; *Shiji* 58.2091.
- 30 Huang Zhaoji 1998 identifies sixteen disasters in the *Annals* that the *Gongyang* commentary specifically identifies as *zai*.
- 31 That there is not a strict divide between phenomena identified as “catastrophes” and “anomalies” is attested by the classification of fires in Lord Xi, Year 20 (640 BCE), and Lord Zhao, Year 18 (524 BCE), as “anomalies.” The *Gongyang* commentary says about a frost recorded in Lord Ding’s Year 1, that “anomalies are more significant than catastrophes,” revealing that the *Gongyang* distinction between the two terms is at odds with the standard English words chosen to render the Chinese, since “catastrophe” sounds more serious in English. Huang Zhaoji 1998, 87–90, discusses the contrast in detail. Editors’ note: Although in some cases *tian* may be translated as “Heaven,” implying an anthropomorphic deity, in many citations *tian* may refer instead to cosmic processes. Hence the decision to render the same word in two ways.
- 32 In general, the range of signifiers that merit comment in the *Gongyang* commentary is narrower than in the *Zuo*, which Wai-yee Li 2007 describes as including “traces” (subtle clues, such as signs of the enemy’s military strategy), “gestures” (typically, a ritually incorrect choice, excess or inadequate grief, futile acts), “numinous signs” (movements of the stars, calendars, natural anomalies, and the results of divination) and “inconstant spirits and equivocal signs” (e.g., dreams, children’s songs). See “The Reading of Signs” in Wai-yee Li 2007, 202–48.
- 33 Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu*, 766.
- 34 For Yang Bojun’s remark, see his *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu*, 766; for the translation, see Legge 1865–95, 5:329.
- 35 Yang Bojun sensibly points out that the subsequent character *ji* 饑 is also problematic in this context.
- 36 *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu*, 362. I have translated this according to my understanding of Du Yu’s reading. It is also possible to read the final two words, *bian yi* 變矣, as “This [confirms it was] change.”
- 37 Su Yu’s *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng*, chap. 30 (“Bi ren qie zhi”), 260.
- 38 *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhushu*, 362.
- 39 *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan zhushu*, 205.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Rao Shangkuan 2006, 368–84, esp. 371n1. Rao argues that this establishes a clear chronological sequence for the two commentaries.
- 42 *Hanshu* 27D.1434.
- 43 *Hou Hanshu* 31.1113.
- 44 *Hanshu* 75.3153–54.
- 45 *Hanshu* 70.3866 explains the portent reading as a prediction of Xuandi’s rise: “Five years later, Filial Emperor Xuan rose from among the commoners, and when he took the throne, he appointed [Sui] Meng’s son to the office of Courtier.”
- 46 *Hanshu* 27C-shang.1400.

- 47 Qian Hanji, “Annals of Emperor Wu.”
- 48 One late imperial Daoist text dedicated to the history of Mount Tai in Shandong recounts the story of Sui Meng, followed by a story dated to the reign of Chengdi, with a portent interpreted according to Jing Fang’s tradition of the *Changes*. Zha Zhilong’s 1587 *Dai shi* (*History of Dai*) recounts the story of burning crows’ nests that are interpreted according to the *Changes* as a negative omen (cf. Lu 旅, *shang jiu* 上九). According to Jing Fang’s tradition, this is associated with the presence of a cruel tyrant. This event and the Jing Fang reading are also recorded in the *Hanshu* (27B-xia.1416), but another reading is as a portent of Zhao Feiyan and her sister’s murder of two of Chengdi’s sons or of Wang Mang’s greed and cruelty (Zha’s *Dai shi*, 2002, 14.1).
- 49 *Hanshu* 75.3192.
- 50 *Hanshu* 10.340, 11.758, 26.1312.
- 51 *Hanshu* 36.1967.
- 52 *Hou Hanshu* 83.3395–96.
- 53 *Hanshu* 56.2498. This passage is part of Dong Zhongshu’s 134 BCE response to three imperial rescripts inquiring about the relationship of past to present rule. Dong’s responses cover the role of the models of the past in the present, the differences between past and present, and the role of Heaven. Michael Loewe thinks these probably are “the most authentic statement of Dong Zhongshu’s views” (Loewe 2011, 86).
- 54 *Hanshu* 75.3154.
- 55 *Hanshu* 88.3617. Interestingly, Zheng Xuan’s “Liuyi lun” (“On the Six Classics”) listed Yan Anle’s disciples as Yin Feng (likely a variation on Ling Feng), Liu Xiang, and Wang Yan. See Xu Yan’s subcommentary to He Xiu’s *xu* (postface, preface) to *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu*; also *Hanshu* 88.1367.
- 56 *Hanshu* 99B.4126.
- 57 *Hanshu* 77.3263.
- 58 Earlier, Yan Pengzu’s students were less eminent. His student Wang Zhong taught Gongsun Wen and Dongmen Yun (*Hanshu* 88.3616).
- 59 *Hou Hanshu* 79B.2581.
- 60 On the relative status of the two interpretive schools, see Arbuckle 1994.
- 61 See Kong Yingda’s subcommentary to Lord Yin, Year 1, in the *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*.
- 62 See the preface to the 1815 edition of *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu*, 4.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 *Hou Hanshu* 79B.2583.
- 65 *Hou Hanshu* 35.1207–8.
- 66 *Hou Hanshu* 35.1208.
- 67 *Hou Hanshu* 79B.2582.
- 68 Yasui and Nakamura 1971–92. Yasui Kōzan has written that *Gongyang Annals* interpretation became the basis for the apocryphal texts affiliated with the *Annals*, with the latter texts particularly concerned with nonhereditary succession.
- 69 *Hanshu* 36.1967. See the translation of Liu Xin’s letter in Loewe’s chapter in this volume on Liu Xiang and Liu Xin.
- 70 *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 1.2200.

The Late Western Han Historian Chu Shaosun

Hans van Ess 葉翰

IN 26 BCE, THE EIGHTH YEAR OF CHENGDI'S REIGN, LIU XIANG (79/78–8 BCE) began his famous imperially sponsored project to collect all the texts in the Chinese empire.¹ Liu was particularly interested in Sima Qian's *Shiji* (*Archivists' Record*, comp. ca. 90 BCE).² Liu refrained from making major changes to the existing text of the *Shiji*, perhaps because he, like Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE) considered Sima Qian a “good scribe” (*liang shi*), that is, a careful historian.³ Also like Yang, and at minimum sixteen other scholars, Liu wrote “continuations” to the *Shiji*.⁴ But two others who may have added to the *Shiji* loom large today: Yang Yun (d. 54 BCE), the maternal grandson of Sima Qian, and Chu Shaosun.

While Yang Yun (the subject of Kroll's chapter in this volume) was active during the reign of Xuandi (74–48 BCE), Chu Shaosun, like Liu Xiang and Yang Xiong, lived and worked during the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi. Judging from evidence preserved in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*), it seems that not many people before Yuandi's era were aware of or interested in the *Shiji*.⁵ Today the standard *Shiji* text contains no obvious contributions by Yang Yun.⁶ In consequence, the only man to whom we can safely ascribe additions to the *Shiji* is Master Chu (Chu Xiansheng), whom scholars from the third century CE on have nearly always assumed to be Chu Shaosun, an identification that I tentatively adopt.⁷ No fewer than ten *Shiji* chapters contain additions purportedly “made” (*zuo*) by this Master Chu:

Shiji 13, “Table of the Three Dynasties”

Shiji 20, “Table of the Marquises Ennobled since the Jianyuan Period (140–135 BCE)”

Shiji 48, “Hereditary House of Chen She”

Shiji 49, “Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor”

Shiji 58, “Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang”

Shiji 60, “Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings”

Shiji 104, “Biography of Tian Shu”

Shiji 126, “Biographies of Sarcastic Jesters”

Shiji 127, “Biographies of the Diviners of Days”

Shiji 128, “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil”

That the *Shiji* 48 “addition” was a later addition seems doubtful. Xu Guang (353–425 CE) in his commentary speaks of one *Shiji* edition that explicitly attributed a longish insertion from Jia Yi’s (ca. 200–168 BCE) famous “Guo Qin lun” (“On Faulting Qin”), in that very chapter, to the Taishi Gong himself (probably Sima Tan or Sima Qian, but not Chu).⁸ As the remaining nine passages represent substantial contributions to the *Shiji*, it is odd that the voluminous literature on the *Shiji* does not include, so far as we know, a systematic description and analysis of the contents of those passages. This chapter aims to fill that lacuna.

Biography of Chu Shaosun

A commentary by a certain Wei Leng (fl. 500–550? CE), citing the otherwise unknown text *Chu Yi jiazhuan* (*The Family Traditions of Chu Yi*),⁹ says of Chu Shaosun that he was the grand-nephew of one Chu Da; that he lived in Pei, the hometown of the Han founder; that he studied with Wang Shi, a great classicist (*da ru*), which gained him the honorific title of “Master Chu”; and that he became an Academician (Boshi) during the reign of Xuandi.¹⁰ Zhang Shoujie (fl. 737 CE), author of the authoritative *Shiji zhengyi* (*Corrected Meanings in the Shiji*) commentary, writes more cautiously that he “suspects that [Master Chu] was the Chu Shaosun who continued the *Shiji* during the reigns of Yuandi [r. 48–33 BCE] and Chengdi [r. 33–7 BCE].”¹¹ Sources antedating these reigns say nothing more about the textual history of the *Shiji*. However, Chu Shaosun’s great-uncle Chu Da at some unspecified time became Chancellor in Liang kingdom,¹² in Henan, the very place that Chu Shaosun discusses in a note appended to the “Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang” (*Shiji* 58). Could Chu Shaosun have gotten his information on Liang from his great-uncle?

Appended to the *Hanshu* biography of Wang Shi, Chu’s teacher and a specialist in the Lu tradition of the *Odes* (*Shi*), are three lines in the print version devoted to Chu.¹³ Timotheus Pokora, the only Western Sinologist to have attempted a biographical sketch of Chu,¹⁴ to a large extent based his sketch on those lines, omitting any discussion of Chu’s possible contributions to the *Shiji*. Chu Shaosun reportedly said of himself that

he “penetrated the arts associated with the classics and studied with an Academician, learning the *Annals* (*Chunqiu*).”¹⁵ There is no reason why Chu, in addition to studying the *Odes*, would not also have concerned himself with writings on history.¹⁶ Thus, Chu may have studied the *Shiji* or parts of it during his formative years.¹⁷

Chu Shaosun’s great-uncle Chu Da was said to be one of the most promising students of the *Gongyang* master Dong Zhongshu (ca. 179–104 BCE), whom most assume was also the teacher of Sima Qian.¹⁸ Another possible connection between the Chu and the Sima families dates to 110 BCE, when Chu Da lost out in an instance of court rivalry to Ni Kuan, an expert in the *Documents* (*Shangshu*) who worked closely with Sima Qian to devise the famous Taichu (104–101 BCE) calendar for the Western Han court. As an Academician, Chu Da was a potential candidate to fill the post of Imperial Counselor, yet Ni Kuan, a mere disciple of the Academicians, received the coveted position because Ni had drawn up the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies performed by Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE) for the first time in 110 BCE at Mount Tai.¹⁹ As scholars of the *Shiji* know, Sima Tan became apoplectic when he was not allowed to participate in or even witness those ceremonies,²⁰ and Tan’s death shortly afterward probably explains why the *Shiji* account of Ni Kuan is not particularly favorable.²¹ While the foregoing suggests several possible ties between the Chu and the Sima families, we still cannot know whether the Chus and the Simas—or indeed, Chu Da and Chu Shaosun—thought along the same lines, though this is a crucial question, perhaps *the* question, for anyone interested in Chu Shaosun’s contributions to the *Shiji*. The main evidence for ascertaining Chu’s assessment of the *Shiji* arguments about Western Han remains those ten additions ascribed to Chu Shaosun.

One other connection may be relevant in this context: as Ban Gu remarks in his biography of Sima Qian, Yang Yun, sometime during Xuandi’s reign, was the first to make the *Shiji* better known, “transmitting this book as his grandfather’s work,”²² after which that monumental history came into wider circulation (see Kroll’s chapter in this volume). During the early part of Xuandi’s reign, Yang Yun served at court as Courtier and palace guard, but in 66 BCE, he was promoted to a post supervising all the palace attendants.²³ Chu Shaosun remarks several times that it was during his time as Courtier that he received the information he later used when compiling his additions to the *Shiji*.²⁴ We learn from Wei Leng that Chu Shaosun became Academician under Xuandi, and from Zhang Yan (third century CE) that Chu served Yuandi and Chengdi,²⁵ so Yang Yun may well have been a prime source of Chu’s information.²⁶

In an often quoted piece, Sima Qian remarks that he produced two manuscripts of the *Shiji*, one “kept in a famous mountain and a copy in the capital.”²⁷ Nearly all scholars of China today accept that at least one copy of Sima Qian’s work must have come eventually into the hands of Yang Yun, who could not have received it directly from Sima Qian, given Qian’s early death. The “Letter to Ren An” ascribed to Sima Qian has Qian saying that the text “was to be given over to the right persons, to make it known in the cities and the great metropolitan centers.”²⁸ At the same time it seems clear that Yang

Yun did not entrust Chu Shaosun with his own copy of the *Shiji*. Had Yang done so, two statements by Chu could not be explained:

When your servant was lucky enough to become an attendant Courtier due to his literary abilities, he liked to peruse the biographies by the Taishi Gong. As these said that “the text and the wording of the Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings [who were Han Wudi’s sons] are well worth contemplating,” I looked for this chapter [*Shiji* 60], but was never able to find it. I ventured to take the letters of investiture from an elderly man [or men?] fond of ancient precedents, listed these affairs, and transmitted them, so as to enable later generations to have a look at the intentions of a worthy ruler.²⁹

When Your servant went back and forth in Chang’an, in search of the “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,” he could not find it [*Shiji* 128]. Therefore he went to the office of the Great Diviner, where he queried the Authority on Precedents (Zhanggu), the Textual Scholars (Wenxue), and the elderly who were practiced in such matters, in order to write down how the diviners dealt with divination by turtle and milfoil, listing them below.³⁰

From these statements it is obvious that Yang Yun did not lend a complete copy of the *Shiji* to Chu Shaosun. Why not? Lü Shihao has pointed out that both Chu Shaosun and Ban Gu comment on Yang Yun’s difficult personality.³¹ Did Yang dislike Chu, or perhaps fear that Chu might write something that disagreed with his own ideas about what his grandfather had wanted to say? This raises the larger question to which we will return: did the early transmitters of the *Shiji* in any way differ in their transmissions, given that some apparently worked without imperial commission?

The Fate of the *Shiji* after Sima Qian’s Death

Today the chapter entitled “Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings” (explicated below) consists of a rather long text requesting that the throne enfeoff the three imperial sons, which is ascribed to general Huo Qubing (d. 117 BCE) and other officials.³² On the basis of the foregoing statements, many have argued that Chu Shaosun never saw the chapter, although no one disputes that Chu would have seen Sima Qian’s brief synopsis of the chapter included in *Shiji* 130.³³ Chu Shaosun mentions not seeing two chapters, but Ban Gu (32–92 CE)—living two centuries after Qian and a century after Chu—tells us that ten *Shiji* chapters were missing: “Ten chapters are missing [or lacking some part?]. There is a record of them but no text.”³⁴ Was Ban referring to the palace library inventory composed by Liu Xiang and Liu Xin during Chengdi’s reign, as proposed by the modern scholar Yi Ping? Or did Ban mean the table of contents included in the final chapter of the *Shiji*?³⁵ We may never know. Zhang Yan compiled the first extant

list of the ten chapters supposedly lost after Sima Qian's death, which includes the two chapters said by Chu to be missing, though the order given in Zhang's original does not match the order given here:

- Shiji* 11, "Basic Annals of Emperor Jing"
- Shiji* 12, "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu"
- Shiji* 22, "Table of Generals and Chancellors from the Han Founding"
- Shiji* 23, "Treatise on the Rites"
- Shiji* 24, "Treatise on Music"
- Shiji* 25, "Treatise on the Pitch Pipes"
- Shiji* 60, "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings"
- Shiji* 98, "Biographies of Fu, Xin, and Kuai"
- Shiji* 127, "Biographies of the Diviners of Days"
- Shiji* 128, "Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil"

To this list Zhang Yan appended a comment: "During the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, Master Chu filled in the lacunae (*bu que*), making (*zuo*) four chapters of his own, namely, the 'Basic Annals of Emperor Wu,' the 'Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings,' the 'Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,' and the 'Biographies of the Diviners of Days.'" Zhang then condemned Chu's language as "rustic, vulgar, and not in conformity with Sima Qian's original intention."³⁶

Many of the problems that *Shiji* scholars face today originate with these statements by Zhang Yan. Moreover, at least in the case of the "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu," Zhang's statement about Chu Shaosun "filling in the lacunae" and "making" the chapter is almost certainly wrong, since the *Basic Annals* largely copies another *Shiji* chapter, the "Treatise on the Feng and Shan Sacrifices," whose attribution to Sima Qian has never been questioned. So, with that one chapter, Chu Shaosun could at most have repaired the *Shiji* on the basis of the *Shiji*, rather than writing a chapter *de novo*. Perhaps Chu Shaosun "made" (which usually means "composed") the other three chapters. But if this is so, why does Chu's clearly identified comment in *Shiji* 127 follow material ascribed to a Taishi Gong? Were Zhang Yan's claims entirely correct, we would have to imagine Chu ascribing the "Biographies of the Diviners" to Sima Tan, Sima Qian, or some later Taishi Gong, and then commenting on the earlier text.³⁷

Three of the four texts ascribed by Zhang Yan to Chu Shaosun begin with the words, "Master Chu said," and before these words all three texts (not to mention a fourth, the "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu") contain a comment attributed to a Taishi Gong, which most certainly derives from a person working *before* Chu.³⁸ We cannot exclude the possibility that Zhang Yan saw a *Shiji* version that differed from the one we know today, especially since the order of the chapters differs in Zhang's list. Perhaps the *Shiji* chapter 98 that Zhang Yan saw was indeed "composed" by Master Chu but was later replaced by the original—once the composition by Sima Qian resurfaced.³⁹ In any case, we have

only Zhang Yan's testimony that the biographies were not written by Sima Qian. A final problem with Zhang's assertion is that two of the four chapters Zhang ascribes to Chu (the "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings" and the "Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil") look so truncated that they may consist of little more than a few passages assembled by Master Chu.

Because Zhang Yan alleges that Chu "filled in" only four of the ten missing chapters he listed, we cannot be certain whether Chu had seen the remaining six. By Tang times, however, *many* additional chapters were being attributed to Chu Shaosun,⁴⁰ and the scholarly disputes had begun over how much of the *Shiji* was by the Simas, father and son.

Notwithstanding this controversy, Zhang Yan unambiguously states that he saw a *Shiji* version of 120 chapters, to which 4 chapters had been "added" by Chu, making a total of 124 chapters. (Recall Zhang Yan's dubious statement that Chu Shaosun compiled the "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu.") The commentator Xu Guang (353–425 CE) seems to have been the first to have seen several versions of the *Shiji*, including the additions ascribed to Chu Shaosun and all ten chapters that Zhang had declared missing, unless Liu Xiang enjoyed similar access much earlier while organizing the palace holdings.⁴¹

Then Liu Zhiji's (661–721 CE) *Shitong* (*Thorough Discussion of History*) introduced two further complications: first, Liu modified Ban Gu's statement to read, "The ten chapters *had not yet been completed*; there were only entries [in the inventory]"; second, Liu interpolated two characters into Zhang Yan's original statement, saying that Master Chu "*once again*" or "in his turn" (*geng*) filled in some gaps, "making" the "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu," the "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings," the two biographies entitled "Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil" and "Diviners of Days," and so on.⁴² This left readers unsure just how many biographies Chu Shaosun had "made." However puzzling Liu's emendations, the *Shiji* version known to Liu must have resembled the *Shiji* we know today, since by Liu's time all the major commentaries had been produced for every chapter we have today. Moreover, Chu's additions to the *Shiji* were almost certainly included in the Tang editions, as they appear in all the Song printed versions. Meanwhile, Lü Zuqian (1137–1181 CE), a great Southern Song scholar, persuaded many that not much of Sima Qian's original had been lost, despite the suspicious near duplications between the "Treatise on the Feng and Shan Sacrifices" and the "Basic Annals of Emperor Wu."⁴³

Let us turn now to several notable additions to the *Shiji* besides those clearly ascribed to Chu Shaosun:

To *Shiji* 6, "Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin," Sima Qian himself (or Tan?) appended the famous essay "On Faulting the Qin."

To *Shiji* 22, "Table of Generals and Chancellors from the Han Founding," someone (possibly Chu?) added the entries after the Tian Han reign period (100–97 BCE).⁴⁴

- To *Shiji* 96, “Biography of Chancellor Zhang,” someone appended short biographies of six Western Han Chancellors in office under Xuandi and Yuandi (74–34 BCE). Notably, this text ends with a comment by a Taishi Gong, who seems to have been alive when the last of these six Chancellors, Kuang Heng (Chancellor 36–30 BCE), was still active. Perhaps the compiler was Feng Shang (see this chapter’s appendix on Feng), since Chu Shaosun apparently did not call himself Taishi Gong. Nevertheless, Sima Zhen ascribes this appendix to Chu Shaosun.⁴⁵
- To *Shiji* 97, “Biographies of Masters Li and Lu Jia,” someone added an account of Li Yiji, an adviser to the Western Han founder, that is strikingly at variance with what is said of Li earlier in the same chapter.
- To *Shiji* 110, “Biography of the Xiongnu,” the editors of the authoritative Zhonghua shuju edition of the *Shiji* argue for an addition, since the current chapter ends with general Li Guangli’s surrender to the Xiongnu in 90 BCE. But Sima Qian, who may have died only in 86 BCE, could well be the author of this passage.⁴⁶ (The same applies to the short biographical sketches appended to *Shiji* 111.)
- To *Shiji* 112 was added an edict by Empress Dowager Wang, dating from the reign of Pingdi (r. 1–6 CE), of which Sima Zhen’s *Shiji suoyin* asserts, “This is another record *not* recorded by Chu Shaosun.”⁴⁷ Directly after the edict, someone appended an appraisal that Ban Gu wrote for *Hanshu* 58.⁴⁸
- To *Shiji* 117, “Biography of Sima Xiangru,” was added a remark by Yang Xiong, who long postdated Sima Qian.⁴⁹ This remark may represent a copyist’s error or an interpolation by a later editor.
- To *Shiji* 50, 52, and 93, brief references were added to events that occurred after the death of Sima Qian. Sima Zhen or Zhang Shoujie ascribed these additions to Chu Shaosun.⁵⁰

We will probably never have sufficient evidence to decide which additions were written by whom, but by Tang times it was customary to ascribe most of the foregoing additions to Chu Shaosun.

A detailed discussion of Chu Shaosun’s contributions follows below, so the only question that must be addressed here is *when* Chu Shaosun might have written his additions, regardless of the number of those additions. Yi Ping has suggested that Chu finished his work about 47 BCE, the second year of Yuandi’s reign.⁵¹ This suggestion notes that an appendix to one *Shiji* table contains short sketches of forty-one men enfeoffed under Yuandi’s predecessors Zhaodi and Xuandi, but only one under Yuandi, the father of Yuandi’s Empress Wang (of whom, as it happens, Chu was rather critical): “Since the Chuyuan reign period [48–44 BCE], he [Wang] has been eminent, honored, and involved with affairs of state. Many itinerant hangers-on looking for a position in the capital have gotten his support. I never heard he had any intelligent strategy that would propagate the glories of the ruling house.”⁵²

These are the final words of the appendix by Chu Shaosun to the *Shiji* table. If Chu Shaosun deprecated the achievements of the Wang family, he may well have decided to quit writing entries on persons enfeoffed during their rise to power. Thus Zhang Yan could be right that Chu composed his additions during the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, apparently without imperial commission.

The Content of Chu Shaosun's *Shiji* Contributions

Because Zhang Yan and others deemed Chu Shaosun's style "vulgar" and "contrary to Sima Qian's original intention," present-day readers must ask two questions: Is Chu's style particularly bad? And did Chu aim merely to supply information missing from the manuscript(s) of Sima Qian's *Shiji* he knew, or to praise or blame Sima Qian's opinions regarding Western Han?⁵³ Put another way, did Chu's agenda differ from that of Sima Qian?

Occasionally Chu Shaosun presents himself as one who wrote for those who "liked to gossip about affairs [at court]" (*haoshizhe*),⁵⁴ sometimes using slightly strange wording,⁵⁵ although his narration is usually readable, even fluent. In the "Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang," Chu begins, "When your servant was a Courtier he heard this from those old courtiers in the palace halls who liked to gossip about such affairs."⁵⁶ In the "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings" chapter, Chu says that he received the letters of investiture "from elders" who were fond of precedents and government affairs, which he then transmitted, so that later generations might discern a worthy ruler's intentions in them. In the "Biographies of Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil," Chu reports that he went to the office of the Great Diviner, where he consulted with "the Authority on Precedents, the Textual Scholars, and the elders who were practiced in such matters," before writing about divination.⁵⁷ Since one famous allusion in *Mencius* 5A/8 identifies those who "liked to gossip about affairs" with base slanderers, what might the same phrase mean here? In all likelihood, Chu is not disparaging those "who liked to gossip about affairs," for he repeatedly identifies this sort of person as the ultimate authority for Chu's own accounts. To begin to answer this question, let us look carefully at Chu's known contributions to the *Shiji* and try to determine how those contributions addressed key issues of the time.

THE ROLE OF HUO GUANG, REGENT 87–68 BCE

Basing her views on a speculation advanced by Gary Arbuckle, Dorothee Schaab-Hanke has recently suggested that Chu Shaosun, at least from 78 BCE, intended to register his support for the belief that the Liu clan should abdicate in favor of a strong "new man" (quite possibly Huo Guang).⁵⁸ While some Han subjects did say openly that the Liu clan should cede its place to a worthy man, Chu's writings decades later reveal his conviction that the Liu clan still retained the Mandate and thus need not consider

abdicating. Chu made two further claims: that the Han founders were miraculously conceived, and that they descended from the Yellow Emperor, claims that tally with Sima Qian's *Basic Annals* chapters for Shang and Zhou.⁵⁹ "Heaven repays those who have virtue," Chu says, and he continues: "Men who do not know this think that they [the heroes] rose up from the ranks of mere commoners. How could mere commoners rise for no reason to rule the empire? Surely it was ordered by Heaven!"⁶⁰

By Chu Shaosun's account, then, the Yellow Emperor's descendants would enjoy "blessings" for ten thousand generations, while the descendants of lesser men would enjoy a mere thousand years—and only *if* they raised troops and won a war, as had a King of Shu. (This allusion to a King of Shu is utterly baffling.)⁶¹ Apparently Chu by such statements wanted to "prove," not only that some descendants of the Yellow Emperor were still living during Western Han, but also that the Han throne could plausibly trace its origins back to this same Yellow Emperor, contrary to the doubts expressed by Sima Qian and others.⁶² Chu next identified Huo Guang as a descendant of the Yellow Emperor. As readers will recall, Huo, until his death in 68 BCE, enjoyed powers as regent that surpassed those of the young emperor Xuandi. Chu even piled on details to strengthen the argument that Huo Guang was a direct descendant of the Yellow Emperor.⁶³ Most of all, Chu espoused a tradition called *The Yellow Emperor's Cycles*, which predicted that "more than a hundred years after the rise of the Han there will come a man, neither short nor tall, who hails from the community of the White Swallow [Baiyan]. And he it is who will handle the politics of the empire, as the ruler of this age will be a baby still."⁶⁴

The "baby" seems an obvious reference to Zhaodi, who ascended the throne at age seven or eight; and though Chu referred to him as "the ruler of this age," Chu ended his remarks about Huo Guang, saying, "General Huo [regent for Zhaodi] came from Baiyan in Pingyang. When your servant was a Courtier, I spoke with the magicians about his [Huo's?] merits when we met in the market pavilion, and they told this to your servant. Isn't it extraordinary?"⁶⁵ Does this passage really suggest that Chu Shaosun (or Sima Qian, for that matter) wished to advance the regent Huo Guang as founder of a new dynasty? It more readily conveys the idea that no dynastic change is needed, since Huo Guang assists and supports the ruling house as the Duke of Zhou (Zhougong) had assisted and supported King Cheng of Zhou a millennium earlier; we may recall that Huo, like the Duke of Zhou, was also related to the ruling house, albeit more remotely.

THE DIVINERS

The expression "Isn't it extraordinary?" (used by Sima Qian in his chapter devoted to three sarcastic jesters, *guji*, *huaji*)⁶⁶ recurs in a second text supposedly "made" by a Master Chu and ascribed to Chu Shaosun, which proclaims the old stories about turtleshell divination to be at once "extraordinary" and credible.⁶⁷ Chu's proof of this point revolves around his jesuitical analysis of whether it is right for a diviner to kill a turtle,

a divine being.⁶⁸ In Chu's opinion no commoner may do this, but a king or his agents may. All this seems to rebut Sima Qian, who conceded the possible validity of divination by turtleshell but deemed it unwise to base policy solely on divinations: "A man who . . . turns his back on the way of man, believing only in lucky omens, is someone whom [even] the spirits cannot manage to set right." Sima also mentions that south of the Yangzi he saw elders eating turtle meat, in the belief that divine nourishment of this sort would build up their *qi* ("spirit" or "vital energy"), to which the historian retorts, "You don't think they were lying, do you?"⁶⁹ By contrast, Chu fervently supports divination's claims, citing an imperial decree that specialists in the Wuxing must be consulted on certain occasions.⁷⁰ Unquestionably, Chu contradicts Sima Qian on the subject of divination.

THE "HEREDITARY HOUSES OF THE THREE KINGS" (*SHIJI* 60),
WITH HUO GUANG AS THE DUKE OF ZHOU REDIVIVUS

After this brief excursus on divination, we must ask whether Chu Shaosun wished to claim that Sima Qian at least partly wrote the *Shiji* to promote the idea of the empire devolving on Huo Guang. As no one would have dared to even hint at such a thing while the Liu clan ruled, especially after the execution of Sui Hong and his followers, a different explanation is more plausible.⁷¹ The imperial succession was at stake, and Chu's prose seems designed to evoke the image of the Duke of Zhou, and of Huo Guang acting like the Duke, for the benefit of the current ruling house. This is confirmed by the "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings" chapter, which, from the third century CE, with Zhang Yan, is deemed the work of Chu Shaosun alone.

The chapter opens circa 117 BCE, with Huo Qubing, Huo Guang's elder brother, asking the court to fix an auspicious day in summer on which Han Wudi would install his three sons as kings. That request was duly relayed to the throne by an imperial officer named Guang (most probably Huo Guang). The emperor agreed that this should be discussed among his senior officials, who advised that the three sons—"the subjects Liu Hong, Liu Dan, and Liu Xu"—all be enfeoffed.⁷² Only after that advice had been formally presented three times did Wudi consent.⁷³ An auspicious day was determined (the twenty-eighth day of the fourth month),⁷⁴ at which point territories were assigned to each of them. Liu Hong, Lady Wang's son, aged about ten, was named King of Qi; Dan and Xu, born of the deceased concubine named Li,⁷⁵ became Kings of Yan and of Guangling, respectively.⁷⁶

The chapter appends the three letters of investiture, which assign to each son a clod of earth colored according to the direction in which his fief lay: green for Qi in the east, black for Yan in the north, and red for Guangling to the south. In each of the three letters a formulaic charge is followed by a reminder to the new kings of their obligations to their ancestors and their solemn duty to contribute to the defense of the borders. Then come individualized admonitions, stipulating the special challenges

presented by the kings' territorial bases and the mindfulness required to meet these challenges. An exhortation to "protect your fief and order the people" ends each letter.⁷⁷ The chapter itself concludes with an assertion by an unknown Taishi Gong to the effect that from olden times true kings have enfeoffed their sons and close relatives, the better to increase their own presence throughout the empire, and commenting that "in the affairs that happened in Yan and Qi [under their kings], there was nothing worth noting."

Given the ascription of this passage to a Taishi Gong, many have been inclined to attribute it to Sima Qian, despite the fact that Zhang Yan says that this chapter was lost. The author, whomever he was, says nothing about the character or deeds of the kings themselves; at the same time there may not have been much to say, given that all three were but children at the time of enfeoffment and, moreover, the most important events associated with these three sons occurred after Han Wudi's death.⁷⁸ Yet Chu Shaosun's opening passage in this chapter contains these words:

When your servant was lucky enough to become a courtier in attendance because of his literary abilities, he liked to read the biographies of the Lord Senior Archivist. In these biographies it is claimed that "the text and the wording of the Hereditary Houses of the three kings [i.e., the sons of Emperor Wu] are worth reading." I [therefore] looked for this Hereditary House chapter but was never able to find it. . . . Thus I ventured to take the letters of investiture . . . listed these affairs in order, and transmitted them.

This has led some scholars to doubt the authorship of Sima Qian. Still, as Lü Shihao has argued, the reference to "these biographies" may refer to the table of contents for the *Shiji* (preserved in *Shiji* 130) rather than to *Shiji* 60 itself. Lending support to Lü's surmise are Chu's own words, "in the(se) biography(ies) it is claimed" (*zhuan zhong cheng*), coupled with the fact that *Shiji* 60 is not a biography, whereas *Shiji* 130 is.⁷⁹ If Lü is right, today's *Shiji* contains a separately transmitted portion of text by Sima Qian that was unknown to Master Chu, plus Chu's comments on the investiture documents.

Sima Qian was not inclined to mince words when criticizing Han Wudi, and he particularly objected to Wudi's mistreatment of his nobles. Wudi demoted nobles (*zhuhou*) and reduced kingdoms in such large numbers that a careful reader of *Shiji* 60 cannot but be struck by its silence on this very topic.⁸⁰ Perhaps *Shiji* 60 represents Sima Qian's attempt to criticize Wudi subtly, implying that these sons had done nothing to merit their elevation to the highest ranks of royalty. By contrast, Chu in his introduction pronounced the enfeoffment the act of a truly worthy ruler, and clearly Chu was not indulging in irony here.⁸¹ Chu then offered to explicate the content of the decrees so that readers might understand them—something Sima Qian would have never said.

Chu Shaosun began his explication with a story.⁸² Lady Wang was ill when her son was enfeoffed, so Wudi went to her in person to ask the location she would prefer for

her son's appanage. Lady Wang suggested the city of Luoyang, but Wudi demurred, on the grounds that Luoyang was too strategically important. When Lady Wang did not offer a second choice, Wudi himself suggested the area of Qi as the best place in the empire "east of the passes." Lady Wang rejoiced. She could not know that her son would die young and childless, after which his Qi kingdom would be abolished. Chu's story underscores the portrait of Wudi as a humane man who truly loved this woman but did not forget his duty as a good ruler. After some explanations about the particular content and style of the investiture decree for Lady Wang's son, Chu commented that the people of Qi were deceitful, "not accustomed [to performing] rites and duties,"⁸³ as Wudi's charge to Liu Hong noted, and that the King of Qi was faithful to his father's admonitions.⁸⁴ Finally, Chu exclaimed: "Farsighted was the worthy ruler [Wudi]! Brilliant his singular insight! He admonished the King of Qi to be cautious about the interior. He admonished the King of Yan not to get angry or turn his back on virtue. He admonished the King of Guangling to look to the exterior [i.e., pay attention to foreign affairs], and not to flaunt his might and wealth."⁸⁵

Without regard to Sima Qian's chapter order for the kings,⁸⁶ Chu Shaosun proceeded next to discuss Liu Xu, King of Guangling, whose wealth conferred the potential for military power. He related how generously Wudi's two successors treated Liu Xu and that, notwithstanding their generosity, the King of Guangling first established close diplomatic relations with the rebel King of Chu, and, soon after being forgiven for that treasonous act, went on to repay Xuandi's magnanimity by plotting rebellion on his own. Only then did he finally die a suicide.⁸⁷ Here again, Chu commended Wudi's insight, as manifested in his advice, years before, to this son.

The final part of the chapter concerns King Liu Dan of Yan, whose territory in the north was subject to frequent Xiongnu raids. According to Wudi's investiture decree, Yan's people took pride in their valor but were little given to strategic planning. Therefore Wudi advised Liu Dan to take due precautions against the Xiongnu and also to teach his people the principles that would serve them in times of crisis. Yet the thoughtless boldness that characterized the region apparently infected Liu Dan himself. When Wudi's allegedly rebellious heir died a suicide in 91 BCE, no immediate decision was taken regarding a new heir. At just that delicate time, Liu Dan shot off a letter requesting permission to serve in Wudi's palace guards in Chang'an. The enraged Wudi beheaded the envoy from Yan, exclaiming: "I should have appointed my son to a region that understood rites and duty, such as Qi or Lu."⁸⁸ Instead, I enfeoffed him in Yan and Zhao, and indeed, his heart is full of thoughts of rivalry. The first signs that he is intractable are evident already!" Having vented his rage against the hapless heir, Wudi failed to discipline Liu Dan further. After Wudi's death and Zhaodi's succession, Liu Dan plotted rebellion, on the grounds that his seniority qualified him to rule, that the court led by Huo Guang had deprived him of his rightful throne, and that Zhaodi was a bastard.⁸⁹

In telling this story, Sima Qian nowhere mentioned the mother of Zhaodi. Notably, Chu Shaosun devoted a lengthy passage to her in the chapter on the families related

by marriage to the emperor. Lady Zhao, also called Lady of the Hook and Dart Palace, came from Hejian; she bore Wudi one son, the future Emperor Zhao. Chu exclaimed admiringly: “Wudi at the age of seventy was still able to sire Zhaodi! When Zhaodi ascended the throne, he was but five years old!”⁹⁰ Doubtless carried away by his admiration, Chu’s dates were certainly wrong, as Xu Guang (quoted by Zhang Shoujie) shows: Wudi died at seventy, and Zhaodi was already eight at the time. The Tang commentator Sima Zhen, explaining that Xu Guang relied on the *Hanshu* for those dates, then added the curious sentence: “These are the records of Master Chu.” Sima Zhen then proceeded to “correct” the *Hanshu*, dating Zhaodi’s birth to Yuanshi 3 (3 CE), an obvious mistake for 94 BCE, in the Taishi reign period.⁹¹ Sima Qian dated Wudi’s birth to 156 BCE, the year his father ascended the throne;⁹² and if this date is correct, Wudi would have been sixty-two years old when he sired Zhaodi and seventy when he died. Did Chu simply overlook this contradiction, or did Chu’s *Shiji* manuscript not contain this information?

My guess is that Chu purposely overlooked the unaccountable contradictions, either to exalt Wudi’s potency or to hint that Zhaodi was not likely to be Wudi’s son. I say that because Chu Shaosun continued his account of Lady Zhao with an account of the rebellion by the heir apparent in 91 BCE and its aftermath as it affected Liu Dan, King of Yan. To Sima Qian’s rendition Chu added that Wudi ordered artists to produce a portrait of the Duke of Zhou supporting the young King Cheng,⁹³ signifying to the court Wudi’s intention to install his youngest son as heir.⁹⁴ Yet only a few days later, the aging emperor castigated the Lady of the Dart and Hook Palace for some unnamed offense and condemned her to virtual prison in the Yunyang Palace, where she died.⁹⁵ According to Chu, her death was followed by a great storm and profound grief among the people. When Wudi inquired about the state of mind of the populace, members of the court replied that nobody understood why the mother of the heir apparent had to be killed, to which Wudi answered: “Yes, but then this is not the kind of thing that children and stupid people *would* understand! In the past states have often been ruined because the ruler was young and his mother was still in her prime. If a woman is allowed to exercise power alone, she will behave in a willful, unlicensed, and wanton way, with nothing to check her. Have you never heard of the case of Empress Lü?”⁹⁶

Chu Shaosun interjected a following comment of his own: “Therefore whenever a [concubine] bore a child to Wudi, no matter whether a son or a daughter, the mothers were blamed [for something] and they died. How could one possibly say that he [Wudi] was not a worthy sage? Brilliant and farsighted, he laid strategic plans for later generations. This is really nothing that can be grasped by an idiotic antiquarian with only superficial erudition.”⁹⁷ His posthumous title as ‘Martial’ [Wu] certainly had a basis in fact!”

Is this bitter irony? Not likely. After all, Chu had used the phrase “superficial erudition” in explicating the investiture decrees, meaning that shallow people would never be able to grasp Wudi’s full intent. Sima Qian twice used the phrase “idiotic antiquarian” and both times he seems to have been siding with the “idiotic” (and demonstrably

noncareerist) partisans of earlier traditions.⁹⁸ But whose side was Chu taking in this matter? The references to Empress Lü made a forceful and cogent case. Perhaps Chu thought Wudi's ruthlessness had, in fact, prevented a takeover by a consort clan; after all, too much power was being concentrated in the hands of a consort clan during Chengdi's reign, near the end of Chu Shaosun's life. It seems, at least at this remove, that Chu was disputing Sima Qian's opinion, while using the identical terms. The earlier historian had clearly blamed Wudi for putting down a rebellion by Liu An, King of Huainan, in 122 BCE, which had led, in Sima Qian's estimation, to a terrible "alienation of blood relations."⁹⁹ By contrast, Chu portrayed Wudi's leniency¹⁰⁰ toward his son Liu Dan, King of Yan, as a factor in that son's fomenting repeated rebellions after Wudi's death. Chu added an axiom found in the *Xunzi*: "If the root of the orchid and the rhizome of the valerian are soaked in the water used to wash [dirty] rice, a gentleman will not go near them . . . because [of the filth] they were immersed in."¹⁰¹ In other words, Liu Dan had steeped himself in the nefarious traditions of his appanage. This citation seems to confirm Chu's enthusiasm for the executions ordered, an impression strengthened by Chu's remark that Xuandi, after his succession, elevated two sons of Liu Dan to the rank of marquis, while Liu Dan's former heir apparent was allowed to continue sacrifices to the King of Yan in Yan.¹⁰²

CHU SHAOSUN'S ASSESSMENT OF HAN WUDI'S CHARACTER

Chu Shaosun's additions to *Shiji* 49, "Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor," start by recounting that Chu, when a Courtier, queried one Master Zhongli, who knew old stories and precedents (*gushi*) from the Han house. This man had told him, "A daughter of the future Empress Dowager Wang [then still of commoner status] was fathered by one Jin Wangsun. After the death of both Jin Wangsun and Jingdi, when Wudi was still on the throne, Empress Dowager Wang was the only one [of her generation] still alive."¹⁰³

Elsewhere Sima Qian had already told the story of the Empress Dowager's first marriage to a certain Jin Wangsun, by whom she bore a daughter. Because a diviner predicted that both of her daughters would acquire noble status, the future dowager's mother forced the Jin family to give up her daughter, whom she then entered into the ranks of the ladies serving the future Jingdi (r. 157–141 BCE). The Empress Dowager bore three daughters and one son by the future Jingdi, that son being the future Wudi. Sima Qian's language is at best cautiously neutral about the Empress Dowager, though it verges on the censorious.

Chu Shaosun, relating the same set of events, is unambiguously positive about Wudi, if not about the Empress Dowager Wang. Supposedly, Han Yan, a favorite of the dowager,¹⁰⁴ informed Wudi that the Empress Dowager had a daughter living in Changling, near the capital, at which point the emperor exclaimed, "Why did you never tell me before now?" Then Wudi in person galloped out to Changling, crashed through

the village gate, and ordered his men to surround the Jin family manor. He and his men duly searched for the woman, but the family mansion was in an uproar. Finally someone located the daughter hiding under her bed and dragged her out to greet her emperor. Wudi cried out, "Ah, Elder Sister, why did you hide yourself so well?" Then he led his half sister back to his palace, presented her to her long-lost mother, and lavished upon her money, servants, extensive fields, and a first-class mansion. (Wudi supposedly had intended to be even more generous, but his mother chided his extravagance.)

Clearly Chu Shaosun's aim in telling this story was to portray the "soft" side of Wudi, especially his care for his mother and the members of her family, presenting a humane contrast to Wudi's treatment of Lady Zhao told later in the chapter. And this was not Chu's only story intended to highlight Wudi's family feeling. Appended to *Shiji* 126, the "Biographies of Sarcastic Jesters," is Chu's story illustrating the adult Wudi's deep and abiding affection for his wet nurse.¹⁰⁵ Chu related the wet-nurse story to one about Wudi's jester, Dongfang Shuo, who was well versed in the "arts associated with the classics." Dongfang was justly famous for his rhetorical skills, but he failed to rise in bureaucratic rank, since he lacked the usual ambitions and was content to remain a "hermit at court," devoting all his available time and energy to his sexual affairs.¹⁰⁶ To counter the vicious rumors circulating at court that accused him of harboring treasonous intentions,¹⁰⁷ Dongfang told Wudi that, with the world at peace and so many talented people at court, the emperor had no particular need of him. Chu concluded this anecdote by portraying Dongfang's enemies as "silenced, with no way to respond," suggesting his sincere admiration not only for Dongfang Shuo but, more importantly, for Wudi.¹⁰⁸

KING XIAO OF LIANG AND THE DUKE OF ZHOU

Chu Shaosun's appended comments to *Shiji* 58, "Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang," also concern a succession crisis. King Xiao, younger brother of Jingdi, had cherished hopes of becoming Jingdi's heir apparent, especially since he was the favorite son of their mother, Empress Dou. When it became obvious that his hopes would not be realized, he had Yuan Ang assassinated, the senior official whom he considered chiefly responsible for dashing his hopes. Chu's comment on these events begins by unequivocally accusing court officials: "I venture to say that the reason why King Xiao of Liang became angry and malevolent arose from within the palace. Now the Empress Dowager was a female ruler, and because she loved her youngest son, she wanted him made heir apparent. The senior officials who did not find the right time to break the news that this would not be possible . . . were not loyal servants."¹⁰⁹

One of the few exceptions, as Chu pointed out, was Dou Ying, a nephew of the empress whose honesty about the succession matter won him the lasting enmity of the Empress Dowager.¹¹⁰ Once again Chu resorted to an anecdote about the exemplary—and conveniently legendary—Duke of Zhou:

Of old, King Cheng stood under a tree with his younger brother. The king gave him a leaf of the *tong* tree, saying: "I take this to enfeoff you." When the Duke of Zhou heard about this, he came to the king, and said, "That the King of Heaven enfeoffs his younger brother is very good." King Cheng replied that he was only joking with his brother. The Duke said, "The ruler of men does not jest when he elevates someone, nor does he speak facetiously. You must do what you said."¹¹¹

With that, the king forthwith enfeoffed his younger brother, and he took to heart that henceforth he should never speak carelessly. Jingdi presents a direct contrast with the Duke of Zhou, in that the Han ruler repeatedly promised to name his brother heir, but he never took the necessary actions to fulfill his promises. Chu Shaosun related how Yuan Ang explained patiently to the Empress Dowager that the Han ruling house followed Zhou rather than Shang customs, hence the inheritance of throne from father to son, rather than from elder to younger brother.¹¹² Blaming the messenger, King Xiao of Liang hired assassins to kill Yuan Ang. Terrified that her favorite son would be executed for ordering the murder, the Empress Dowager made a show of refusing to eat, and when Jingdi consulted with his senior officials about what to do in response, all replied that it would be best to send his mother one or more officials well versed in "arts associated with the classics," whereupon Jingdi sent Tian Shu and Lü Jizhu to reason with the Empress Dowager. Both Tian and Lü laid all the blame for King Xiao's vicious act on two of his favorite ministers, denying that the king had any knowledge of the plot, at which the Empress Dowager rejoiced. Chu added: "Therefore I say: Those not well versed in the 'arts associated with the classics' and ignorant of the great ceremonies of past and present should not attain the ranks of the Three Lords, or become chief advisors or intimates [of an emperor]. Men of little experience are like those who think they can see the whole sky through a slender tube."¹¹³

TIAN REN AND THE REBELLION BY THE HEIR APPARENT

We have seen that people who were well versed in the arts or techniques associated with the classics were finally able to persuade Liu Dan, King of Yan, that Zhaodi was indeed Wudi's son. We turn now to Chu Shaosun's assessment of Tian Ren, whose biography Sima Qian attached to the end of *Shiji* 102. Tian was Sima Qian's friend and a client of General Wei Qing, who recommended him for palace service. Tian Ren rose to the post of Assistant to the Chancellor. But in 91 BCE, Tian became embroiled in the Witchcraft Affair and the heir apparent's subsequent rebellion,¹¹⁴ accused of having let the heir apparent escape. For this alleged act of treason, Tian Ren was executed, along with his entire clan.

Many scholars have insisted that Sima Qian stopped recording events after either the Taichu or Tian Han reign periods (104–101 BCE and 100–97 BCE, respectively). If they are correct, Sima Qian could not have written about events of 91 BCE. Others,

equally certain, contend that Sima Qian continued to write his history at least down to 91 BCE, the date of the Witchcraft Affair and subsequent rebellion by the heir apparent.¹¹⁵ Current editions of the *Shiji* contain four references to the Witchcraft Affair, none of which treat the rebellion systematically.¹¹⁶ *Shiji* 128, “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,” says the following:

People like Qiu Ziming became stupendously rich, and then they were ennobled and favored in such a way that they dominated the court. When by means of divination they “shot the worm way,” many were hit by them during the “witchcraft by worm vessels” affair. Countless men who had failed to please someone or who had looked askance at someone were then executed in public, their clans destroyed, and their families extinguished, all because an opinion they had once uttered had offended someone. The hundred officials, trembling with fear, all said that the turtle and milfoil were able to speak [true]. Yet in the end, when the affair was discovered and the culprits punished, their clans, too, were extinguished up to the third degree.¹¹⁷

This passage nicely underscores the skepticism expressed by Sima Qian regarding divination. Yet, like the three other passages referring to the Witchcraft Affair in the *Shiji*, it does not explain what exactly happened.

Only Chu Shaosun provides an explanation, in the only addition he wrote for the biography of an individual person in the *Shiji*’s biographical section. To a brief biography of Ren An, the addressee of the famous letter ascribed to Sima Qian, Chu wrote that both Tian Ren and Ren An served General Wei Qing, whereupon their careers took off. Then, in the course of introducing a third person, Chu criticized Wei Qing for not having employed intelligent men.¹¹⁸ By 91 BCE, seven years after the last Wei marquisate had been forfeited, the Wei heir apparent must have felt quite isolated at court, absent any senior figure supporting his candidacy. Sima Qian’s account gave the bare facts about the advice given by Wei’s client Ning Cheng, as he believed in general that Wei Qing lacked merit and hence was incapable of seeing the imminent danger. Chu almost certainly blamed the heir’s predicament on Wei Qing, since two clients of Wei—a certain Ning Chen and a Master Dongguo from Qi—had both advised Wei to give lavish gifts of money to the rising female favorites at Wudi’s court, to ensure that the Wei heir would continue to have allies once the Wei empress lost favor with Wudi, as she inevitably would.¹¹⁹

But back to Tian Ren and the heir apparent’s rebellion: Tian’s position as Director of Uprightness made him responsible for reporting illegal acts committed by those in officialdom;¹²⁰ during the rebellion, Tian had also been ordered by the Chancellor to supervise the defense of capital city’s gates. This left Tian in a quandary when the heir apparent stormed those gates: “Thinking the heir to be the very ‘flesh and bones’ [of the emperor], Tian Ren as Deputy to the Chancellor . . . [took the heir] to the area of the

imperial tombs, assuming he would pass the time there [until the situation had been brought under control].”¹²¹

When Wudi heard this, he ordered the execution of Tian Ren and Tian’s friend, Ren An, who had initially accepted the insignia of the heir. Wudi felt that Ren An was waiting to see which way the wind turned, and that it was high time, given earlier failures by Ren An, to execute him as well. Here Chu Shaosun, as was his wont, ended his account by citing a popular saying:

Now, by the cosmic laws, the full moon will wane, and things at their prime decline. If a man knows how to advance but not how to retreat, he may enjoy fortune and nobility for quite a while, but in the end the misfortunes will accumulate until calamity results. Therefore when Fan Li [a former Chancellor] left Yue, he declined all offers of office. But his name was transmitted to later generations, and in ten thousand generations he will never be forgotten. How could he be equaled? Those who advance in later times should take his case as a heartfelt warning.¹²²

The story of Fan Li, who became a merchant, is taken up in *Shiji* 41 and 129. What seems noteworthy here is Chu’s belief that Tian Ren and Ren An brought on their own misfortunes, since they failed to consider the probable consequences of their actions. Once again, it appears that Chu parted company with Sima Qian regarding a most important event in Western Han history.¹²³

Conclusion

Earlier in this chapter, we asked whether Chu Shaosun’s language is “rustic and vulgar.” The simple answer is that some passages (mainly Chu’s introductions to chapters) are indeed slightly ungrammatical. But overall Chu wrote a beautiful classical Chinese, different from but by no means inferior to that of Sima Qian. Chu emphasized that he had decided to “continue” the *Shiji* because he wanted to impart its lessons to those of later times who “liked to gossip about affairs,” having a strong interest in governance and policy making. According to Chu, only men who knew the “arts associated with the classics” (a term seldom used in the *Shiji*)¹²⁴ knew how to amicably solve such knotty questions as who had the right to succeed to the imperial throne. This view is central to all of Chu’s contributions.

It was not Chu’s literary style that offended his critics. Rather it seems that Zhang Yan and other critics thought that Chu’s writings lacked the subtlety found in the original *Shiji*. Perhaps they moreover disliked Chu’s generally positive portrayal of Han Wudi, a controversial figure whom Sima Qian disparaged. Chu’s contributions often give readers the impression that he wanted to debate with or “correct” Sima Qian, notwithstanding his occasional adoption of his predecessor’s phrasing.¹²⁵ Nowhere do we

read that Chu was working on imperial commission; like Sima Qian, he was evidently working on his own initiative. So what was his main motive in “continuing” the *Shiji*?

Certainly Chu Shaosun’s interest in Huo Guang as a latter-day Duke of Zhou is striking, though it does not necessarily mean that Chu thought Huo fit to become the founder of a new ruling house. Sima Qian seems to have been sympathetic to the Wei heir apparent, despite his ill-advised rebellion in 91 BCE, and that may explain why Ban Gu chose to insert Sima Qian’s biography in the *Hanshu* where he did, in chapter 62, between chapter 61, on Generals Zhang Qian and Li Guangli, and chapter 63, on the sons of Wudi. Li Guangli surrendered to the Xiongnu after he heard that his whole family had been executed. If, as Lu Yaodong insists,¹²⁶ Li’s surrender in 91 BCE is the last event mentioned in the *Shiji*, it made sense to place Sima Qian’s biography amid such events, in the belief that Sima Qian had once fondly hoped to teach the heir apparent not to act like Wudi.

Pokora, not unreasonably, has argued that Ban Gu was not sympathetic to Chu. For example, Ban noted that Wang Shi had been unwilling to teach Chu more than a couple of poems from the *Odes*; also that Chu and Tang Changbin were successful at court, despite having failed some unspecified part of an examination.¹²⁷ To consider Ban Gu’s sources would take us too far from the present discussion, but it behooves us to consider the treatment accorded the Huo family in the works of Chu Shaosun and Ban Gu. Although critical of the Wang family, who had become too powerful under Chengdi, Chu still seems to have retained hope that Chengdi’s reign would prove successful. That may explain Huo Guang’s importance for Chu. Under Yuandi, only the father of Yuandi’s Empress Wang had been enfeoffed. Chu’s comment about him was extremely disrespectful. Under Chengdi, altogether ten members of the Wang clan were made marquises,¹²⁸ and five of those served as Marshal of State, the most powerful position in the realm for much of Chengdi’s reign. If Chu compared the rise of the Wang family with that of the Huo, that would help explain why he so wholeheartedly agreed with Emperor Wu’s decision to do away with Lady Zhao once she had borne the heir. Ending his introductory remarks to the “Table of the Marquises Enfeoffed since the Jianyuan Period,” Chu Shaosun wrote that readers should take this “as a warning.” Was he then warning the members of the Wang family?

Appendix 1: Feng Shang’s Contributions to the *Shiji*

We know very little about Feng Shang. The catalogue of the Han imperial library tells us that he “continued” seven chapters of the *Shiji*. According to Yan Shigu (581–645 CE), Feng Shang was a student of both Liu Xiang and Wulu Chongzong (fl. ca. 37 BCE), a *Yijing* specialist.¹²⁹ Commentary by Wei Zhao (204–273 CE) reports that, according to Ban Biao’s version of Liu Xin’s *Qiliue*, Feng Shang received an imperial order to write continuations to more than ten chapters of the *Taishi gong [shu]* (i.e., the *Shiji*), and Yan Shigu added that he had composed “quite a number”¹³⁰ of biographies (*liezhuan*) but he

died before finishing the task.¹³¹ Feng Shang’s name is also included in a list, begun by Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, of fifteen persons whom Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* credits with having continued or added to the *Shiji* at the end of the Western Han Han dynasty.¹³² Apparently, only the additions by Feng Shang were considered important enough to be stored in the palace library.¹³³

Unfortunately, we cannot ascertain which pieces Feng Shang “continued.” Some additions to the *Shiji* may be Feng Shang’s rather than Chu Shaosun’s, since Zhang Yan listed them as “missing” but did not ascribe them to Chu. The two treatises on rites and music that incorporate long passages from earlier texts might also be by Feng Shang, except perhaps for their short introductions, which may have been composed by Sima Qian.¹³⁴ Yan Shigu’s assertion that Feng Shang wrote “biographies,” not treatises, would contradict this theory. Moreover, Ban Gu once referred to a piece of information that Feng Shang supplied but that Sima Qian had omitted, and therefore he, Ban, said he would not include that information in his own account.¹³⁵ (The information added by Feng Shang is now lost.) Ban Gu also stated that Feng Shang wrote a biography of one Wang Zun,¹³⁶ most probably implying that Ban derived his account of Wang Zun from Feng’s text. It may be that Feng Shang’s additions mainly concerned persons who post-dated Sima Qian and that they were not transmitted independently, either because Ban incorporated them into the text of his *Hanshu* or because he rejected them.

Appendix 2: Additions to the *Shiji*

SHIJI CHAPTERS WITH ADDITIONS	ASCRPTION AND SOURCE
<i>Shiji</i> 6, “Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin,” part of the <i>Dianyin</i> by Ban Gu (<i>Shiji</i> 6.290–93)	Sima Qian attached the famous “On Faulting Qin” by Jia Yi himself, but the <i>Dianyin</i> was attached by a “later person,” according to Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE) (<i>Shiji</i> 6.291).
<i>Shiji</i> 11, “Basic Annals of Emperor Jing”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25).
<i>Shiji</i> 12, “Basic Annals of Emperor Wu”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223,130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25) and replaced by a text “made” (<i>zuo</i>) by Master Chu. Sima Zhen’s <i>Shiji suoyin</i> says, “Master Chu assembled the affairs of Wudi in chronological form. That here he only used the ‘Treatise on the Feng and Shan Ceremonies’ to fill in the gaps really shows how shallow Chu’s talent was” (<i>Shiji</i> 12.451).
<i>Shiji</i> 13, “Table of the Three Dynasties”	Appendix by Master Chu, introduced with “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 13.505).
<i>Shiji</i> 20, “Table of the Marquises Ennobled since Jianyuan (140–135 BCE)”	Appendix by Master Chu, introduced with “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 20.1059).
<i>Shiji</i> 22, “Table of Generals and Chancellors from the Han Founding”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25). Pei Yin (5th c. CE) says, “Events after the Tian Han reign period were continued by later persons. This is what Master Chu added” (<i>Shiji</i> 22.1142–43).
<i>Shiji</i> 23, “Treatise on the Rites”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25). Zhang Shoujie (fl. 725–735 CE) says, “This treatise was completely [<i>jian</i>] made by Master Chu, who used the essay on rites by Xun Qing [to compile it]” (<i>Shiji</i> 23.1174).
<i>Shiji</i> 24, “The Treatise on Music”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25). Zhang Shoujie (fl. 725–735 CE) says, “Now the order of this text is topsy-turvy. There now is this disorder because of the changes that Master made. . . . What follows [as the last part of the treatise, not in the <i>Yueji</i>] is due to the ideas of Master Chu” (<i>Shiji</i> 24.1234).

<i>Shiji</i> 25, “Treatise on the Pitch Pipes”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says this chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25). Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE) says, “[The book on] military strategy is the same as the ‘Treatise on the Pitch Pipes,’ which was lost after the death of Sima Qian. Chu Shaosun filled in the gaps with the ‘Treatise on the Pitch Pipes.’ ‘The Treatise on the Pitch Pipes’ also briefly talks about the military” (<i>Shiji</i> 130.3319).
<i>Shiji</i> 26, “Treatise on the Calendar”	Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE) says, “[The text] after [the text above] beginning with the reign periods Taishi [96–92 BCE] and Zhenghe [92–89 BCE] until the end of the chapter . . . was all continued by Master Chu” (<i>Shiji</i> 26.1269). Zhang Shoujie (fl. 725–735 CE) says, “[The final paragraph] begins with the phrase ‘To the right is the ‘Treatise on the Calendar.’” The term ‘small rest’ is not right and the names of the years are not completely given. I fear that this has been added to by someone after the death of Master Chu” (<i>Shiji</i> 26.1287).
<i>Shiji</i> 48, “Hereditary House of Chen She”	Part of the “On Faulting Qin” essay is introduced by the words “Master Chu said.” Xu Guang (353–425 CE), quoted by Pei Yin (5th c. CE), says that other versions of this text instead have “The Taishi Gong said.” Pei Yin quotes Ban Gu as saying that this is a passage appended by Sima Qian himself (<i>Shiji</i> 48.1961–62).
<i>Shiji</i> 49, “Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor”	Appended passage introduced with the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 49.1981).
<i>Shiji</i> 50, “Hereditary House of King Yuan of Chu”	Zhang Shoujie (fl. 725–735 CE) identifies an insertion of an event that took place in the second year of the Dijie reign period (69–66 BCE) as a mistake by Chu Shaosun (<i>Shiji</i> 50.1989).
<i>Shiji</i> 52, “Hereditary House of King Daohui of Qi”	Zhang Shoujie (fl. 725–735 CE) says that the reference to an event from the Jianshi reign period (33–29 BCE) was added by Chu Shaosun (<i>Shiji</i> 52.2009).
<i>Shiji</i> 58, “Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang”	Appendix introduced by the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 58.2089).
<i>Shiji</i> 60, “Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says the chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25) and replaced by a text “made” (<i>zuo</i>) by Chu Shaosun. Text with a “Taishi gong yue” section is here followed by an appendix that begins “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 60.2114).
<i>Shiji</i> 93, “Biographies of Han Xin and Lu Wan”	Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE) notes a discrepancy concerning the place of origin of Chen Xi: Chu Shaosun’s explanation “differs” (from that of Sima Qian?). The <i>Shiji</i> 93.2639 text says that Chen Xi came from Wanju, but <i>Shiji</i> 93.2642 says he came from Liang (<i>Shiji</i> 93.2640).
<i>Shiji</i> 96, “Biography of Chancellor Zhang”	Someone has attached short biographies of six Chancellors of the Han who were active under Xuandi and Yuandi (<i>Shiji</i> 96.2686–89). The entry ends with a “Taishi gong yue” passage, with the identity of the Taishi Gong unknown. Sima Zhen’s <i>Shiji suoyin</i> says that the last entry on Chancellor Kuang Heng was added by a “later person”; also, that the account and the “Taishi gong yue” passage were “shallow and rustic” (<i>Shiji</i> 96.2689). No one ascribes the preceding text to Chu Shaosun or anyone else.
<i>Shiji</i> 97, “Biographies of Masters Li and Lu Jia”	Someone unknown has added a second account of Li Yi (<i>Shiji</i> 97.2704–5).
<i>Shiji</i> 98, “Biographies of Fu, Xin, and Kuai”	Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says the chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25).
<i>Shiji</i> 104, “Biography of Tian Shu”	Appended passage introduced by the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 104.2779).
<i>Shiji</i> 110, “Biography of the Xiongnu”	The editors of the modern Zhonghua shuju edition of the <i>Shiji</i> , in company with others, think that text has been added to <i>Shiji</i> 110.1918. Sima Zhen’s <i>Shiji suoyin</i> names Liu Xiang and Chu Shaosun as the authors.
<i>Shiji</i> 112, “Biographies of the Marquis of Pingjin and . . . of Zhufu [Yan]”	To the end of <i>Shiji</i> 112 is appended an edict by Empress Wang. According to the commentator Xu Guang, the edict dates to the Yuanshi reign period. Xu Guang says that this was “made” (<i>zuo</i>) by a “later person.” Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE) adds that this “too” was not recorded by Master Chu. In addition, someone has appended an appraisal that Ban Gu wrote for <i>Hanshu</i> 58.
<i>Shiji</i> 117, “Biography of Sima Xiangru”	At least one sentence that mentions Yang Xiong must have been added to the chapter.
<i>Shiji</i> 126, “Biographies of Sarcastic Jesters”	Appended passage by Chu Shaosun, introduced with the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 126.3203).
<i>Shiji</i> 127, “Biographies of the Diviners of Days”	Appended passage by Chu Shaosun, introduced with the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 127.3221). Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says the chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25) and replaced by a text “made” (<i>zuo</i>) by Chu Shaosun.
<i>Shiji</i> 128, “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil”	Appended passage by Chu Shaosun, introduced with the phrase “Master Chu said” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3225). Zhang Yan (3rd c. CE) says the chapter is “lost” (<i>Shiji</i> 128.3223, 130.3321; <i>Hanshu</i> 62.2724–25) and replaced by a text “made” (<i>zuo</i>) by Chu Shaosun.

Notes

- 1 *Hanshu* 10.310.
- 2 This work is usually called *Records of the Historian*.
- 3 *Hanshu* 62. 2738.
- 4 Lü Shihao 2009, 151–90, assembles a list of all the contributors to the *Shiji* who are known from the early literature. From Feng Shang’s writings, it seems clear that *xu* (to continue) means to compose chapters on persons postdating the compilation of the *Shiji*, whereas *bu* (to supplement) means to add material on persons and events mentioned by Sima Qian. Nothing indicates that Chu Shaosun “restored” materials lost from an original *Shiji*. Cf. Lü Simian [1982] 2005, vol. 2, 806–9. *Hanshu* 76.3239 mentions that Liu Xiang and Yang Xiong wrote biographies. Lü Shihao 2009, 169, 266–76, collects stories about notable persons who postdated Sima Qian.
- 5 *Shiji* 1959, 12.451, 49.1981, 128.3223; *Hanshu* 62.2724. As discussed below, Yi Ping 2000 argues that Chu Shaosun stopped writing in 47 BCE. I do not find Yi’s argument conclusive.
- 6 On Yang Yun as a transmitter of the *Shiji*, see *Hanshu* 62.2737, 66.2889. For three highly speculative ascriptions of passages to Yang, see Yi Ping 1997, esp. 36. Klein 2010, 409n70, registers doubts about Yi’s argument.
- 7 See the discussion in Pokora 1981, 403–30, esp. 429. Timotheus Pokora quotes Chavannes 1895–1905, vol. 3, 186n1, which identifies the author as Chu Shaosun. Pokora is more cautious.
- 8 *Shiji* 48.1961. Note that a much longer version of the same essay was also inserted as the “Appraisal” by Sima Qian at the end of *Shiji* 6, the “Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin.” However, Pei Yin (fl. 438) says that Ban Gu attached “On Faulting Qin” to the “Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin” and to “Hereditary House of Chen She.”
- 9 For Wei Leng, see *Liangshu* 12.225–26, which is quoted by Sima Zhen (ca. 656–720 CE), in his *xu* (postface/preface) to the *Shiji suoyin*.
- 10 *Shiji* 12.451.
- 11 *Shiji* 49.1981; *Hanshu* 88.3610–11. The sentence refers to a commentary by Zhang Yan on *Shiji* 130.3321, in which Zhang says that Chu Shaosun during the two reigns “supplemented” the *Shiji*, replacing several lost chapters.
- 12 *Shiji* 121.3129; *Hanshu* 88.3616.
- 13 See *Hanshu* 88.3610–11 for the three-line entry. Wang Shi, as a renowned teacher, had his biography included in the “Rulin zhuan.”
- 14 Pokora 1981, 411. See also summary on Chu Shaosun in Klein 2010, 404–5. For an equally thoughtful article on Chu, see Schaab-Hanke 2010, esp. 225–42.
- 15 *Shiji* 128.3225. It is not easy to specify or define the “arts associated with the classics” today. Elsewhere, Sima Qian uses the term only once, in his summary of the “Hereditary House of Confucius [Kongzi]” (*Shiji* 130.3310), where he remarks that Confucius repaired the “arts associated with the classics in order to achieve the kingly way . . . and handed down the governing rules of the Six Arts [or Disciplines] for later generations.” This suggests that these arts had something to do with Confucius’s efforts to reform the world. Chu Shaosun used this concept quite often, as we will see.
The story about Chu Shaosun and Wang Shi is given in the *Hanshu*: Wang Shi had been punished by castration after the death of Zhao di; he returned home and refused to teach there. When Chu nevertheless went to study with him, Wang refused to teach him. Chu later became an erudite, apparently because his erudition was associated with that of Wang Shi. He founded one tradition of *Odes* scholarship. See *Hanshu* 86.3610.
- 16 Several *Hanshu* biographies allege that in Western Han many scholars mastered only one of the classics, but this statement does not tally with other information.
- 17 Lü Shihao 2009, 159, on Chu Shaosun’s education.

- 18 Several scholars have raised questions about this consensus-view identification because the *Shiji* biography of Dong Zhongshu can easily be read as a sarcastic criticism of Dong (*Shiji* 121.3128). See Loewe 2011.
- 19 *Hanshu* 58.2633. For the date when Ni Kuan became Imperial Counselor, see *Hanshu* 19B.781.
- 20 *Shiji* 130.3295.
- 21 *Shiji* 121.3125. Apparently Ni Kuan outsmarted both the Sima and Chu Da, although Ban Gu tried hard to convince his readers that Ni and Sima Qian were allies (*Hanshu* 58.2633).
- 22 *Hanshu* 62.2737. The expression *zu shu qi shu* is difficult to interpret, but most take it as I do. The word *shu* may refer to the letter to Ren An, rather than to the *Shiji*. This reading is supported by Li Shan's (630–689) commentary to *Wenxuan* 41.1854 which says: "His old acquaintance, the Regional Inspector Ren An then sent him a letter in which he charged him with the correct way of promoting worthies. Sima Qian answered him. After Sima Qian had died, this letter gradually came out." This summarizes what *Hanshu* 62.2737 says, but clarifies the referent of the phrase "qi shu," showing that it refers to "this letter," rather than to the *Shiji* as a whole.
- 23 Bielenstein 1980, 24. The salary of these bodyguards varied between 300 and 600 bushels (*shi* or *dan*) per year. The head of all the palace attendants was ranked considerably higher, at 2,000 bushels.
- 24 *Shiji* 58.2089, 60.2114, 104.2779, 126.3203, 127.3221, 128.3225.
- 25 *Shiji* 12.451. Pokora 1981, 430, gives a provisional chronology of events, which makes Chu an Attendant under Zhaodi (between 88 and 76 BCE?), then an Academician in 48 BCE or later. Yi Ping 2000, esp. 157, 170, argues that Chu Shaosun was Courtier sometime between 65 and 55 BCE. Yi's arguments, while much more detailed than those in Pokora 1981, are not necessarily more correct. Present evidence simply does not allow us to ascertain when Chu filled what office.
- 26 Lü Shihao 2009, 112.
- 27 *Shiji* 130.3320.
- 28 *Hanshu* 62.2735.
- 29 *Shiji* 60.2114.
- 30 *Shiji* 128.3226.
- 31 Lü Shihao 2009, 115–17, citing *Hanshu* 66.2889, *Shiji* 20.1066. Cf. Klein 2010, 406–13.
- 32 Huo was eighteen *sui* (by Chinese count) in 123 BCE (*Shiji* 111.2928) and he died six years later (*Shiji* 111.2939).
- 33 Cf. Lü Shihao 2000.
- 34 *Hanshu* 62.2724. *Hanshu* 30.1714 lacks the word *que*, meaning "missing."
- 35 Yi Ping 2000. As is well-known, Liu Xiang's inventory was titled *Bielu* and Liu Xin's *Qi lüe*.
- 36 The first source for this statement is probably a commentary by Zhang Yan, quoted in *Hanshu* 62.2724. Apparently, the *Shiji* commentaries by Zhang Shoujie and Sima Zhen quoted in *Shiji* 130.3321–22 (the last chapter in the *Shiji*) cited Zhang's commentary to the *Hanshu* (not the *Shiji*). Cf. *Shiji* 128.3223 and Sima Zhen's *Shiji suoyin* on *Shiji* 12.451.
- 37 Or, this might mean that Chu Xiansheng and Chu Shaosun are not the same person but that Zhang Yan is conflating the two. However, I do have not the time to develop that idea here.
- 38 As at least one passage in the extant *Shiji* quotes a Taishi Gong who definitely is *not* Sima Qian but a person writing in late Western Han (*Shiji* 96.2675), other entries ending with a note by a Taishi Gong could conceivably have been written by persons other than Sima Tan and Sima Qian.
- 39 See van Ess 2006, esp. 85. The biographies of the three marquises Fu, Xin and Kuai in *Shiji* 98 are hardly exciting, but Sima Qian could have meant to write a dull chapter to deliver an oblique criticism of the three.
- 40 See a list of the relevant passages in Lü Shihao 2009, 126–27.

- 41 See this chapter's appendix on Feng. Perhaps a certain Feng Shang played a crucial role in producing that more complete edition, as Feng is the only person whom *Hanshu* 30 credits with making additions to the *Shiji*.
- 42 *Shitong*, "Waipian," *ce* 3, *juan* 12, "Gujin zhengshi," 24 (emphasis added). Liu adds the word *deng* here (rendered "and so on"). NB: The inventory here could refer to Liu Xiang's inventory but also to the chapter prefaces/synopses supplied in *Shiji* 130.
- 43 Lü Zuqian made this argument in his *Da Shiji jieti*, 10.111a. Li Changzhi (1910–1978 CE) largely followed Lü's line, with Yi Ping 1999 and Lü Shihao today refining Li's argument. Cf. Li Changzhi 2007, 100–103; Klein 2010, 305–6. Lü Shihao 2009 argues that, after the execution of Yang Yun in 54 BCE, Yang's own copy was lost, and the copy that Liu Xiang collated sometime between 26 and 6 BCE lacked the ten chapters. But since some chapters were circulating freely by then, as Yang and others had distributed copies among friends and like-minded people, some of these chapters may well have existed in multiple manuscript copies and been available to supplement the version of the *Shiji* known to Zhang Yan.
- 44 *Shiji* 22.1142 says that later persons "continued" the entries, which Chu then inserted into the table.
- 45 *Shiji* 96.2675.
- 46 *Shiji* 110.2918 has the *Shiji suoyin* quoting Zhang Yan's opinion that the final part of this chapter was the work of Liu Xiang and Chu Shaosun.
- 47 *Shiji* 112.2964.
- 48 *Hanshu* 58.2633–34.
- 49 *Shiji* 117.3073.
- 50 *Shiji* 50.1989 has Zhang Shoujie identifying an event that took place in the Dijie reign period (69–66 BCE), which Zhang supposes to be a "mistake" by Chu Shaosun. In *Shiji* 52.2009, Zhang Shoujie says that an event from the Jianshi reign period (32–29 BCE) was added by Chu Shaosun. In *Shiji* 93.2640, Sima Zhen says that a discrepancy concerning Chen Xi's place of origin results from the fact that "Chu Shaosun's explanation differed" (from the one of Sima Qian?). In *Shiji* 93.1639, Chu's text contradicts the statement by the Taishi Gong recorded in *Shiji* 93.1642.
- 51 Yi Ping 2000, esp. 163–70.
- 52 *Shiji* 20.1069.
- 53 Compare Yu Jiayi 1962, 69, which claims that the style of Chu Shaosun was actually not bad.
- 54 For example, in introductory remarks to *Shiji* 20.1059, "Table of Marquises Ennobled since the Jianyuan Period" (i.e., after 140 BCE), Chu says that the *Records of the Taishi Gong* ended with the affairs of Emperor Wu, so Chu added the names of marquises enfeoffed by Wudi's successors, in order to "let those who in later times like [government] affairs have the chance to read and look at the reasons for success and failure, for long and short [duration of the marquises], and the interruption of hereditary [positions]. They should take it as a warning for themselves." Similarly, in *Shiji* 126.3203–4, a chapter devoted to men famous for their sarcastic wit, Chu says that he liked to read the "transmitted words by outside scholars" and that he himself created "words on precedents for jesters," which he appended to the left "in order to show them to those in later times who liked policy matters. To read them rejoices the heart and frightens the ear. Therefore I attached them to the three paragraphs by the Taishi Gong above."
- 55 See *Shiji* 126.3203, for the expression *waijia* (lit., "experts outside"), which two-character phrase Sima Zhen glosses as "not [specializing in] the standard classics." Perhaps the term could also mean "my relatives by marriage," if Chu Shaosun was related to the Sima family by marriage(?).
- 56 *Shiji* 58.2089. The expression *haoshizhe* is open to several interpretations, among them "busy-bodies."
- 57 *Shiji* 128.3226.
- 58 Schaab-Hanke 2010, 237–40, commenting on the first *Shiji* addition introduced by the words

- “Master Chu said” (an appendix attached to the “Table of the Three Dynasties”). Cf. Arbuckle 1995 and contrast van Ess 2006, 100.
- 59 See *juan* 3 and 4 of the *Shiji*.
- 60 This contradicts *Shiji* 61.2124–25, which expresses doubts about this.
- 61 See Takigawa [1932] 1993, 13.32, where a certain Xu Fuyuan identifies this king as Gongsun Yi. But Gongsun Yi is mentioned in *Zuozhuan*, Lord Zhao, Year 7 (trans. in Legge 1865–95, vol. 5, 618), as a person whom Zichan of Zheng established in Zheng, in order to soothe the mind of the people.
- 62 Sima Qian apparently wanted to say that, with the unification of the Qin and Western Han, the old Zhanguo nobility was largely wiped out.
- 63 According to the theory of the succession of the Three Dynasties, the father of the founder of Zhou was Gao Xin, a descendant of the Yellow Emperor. As Huo Guang’s fief was in the place where a Zhou fief had once been established, Chu makes the bizarre case that Huo’s fief can somehow be traced back to the Yellow Emperor as well. During Western Han, the lineages of the Tian family from Qi and the Han clan from Han were far more distinguished than that of the Huo family.
- 64 *Shiji* 13.506–7.
- 65 Conceivably, this statement about a young ruler could also refer to the King of Changyi, who was deposed. Zhang Jihai 2006, 229–31, suggests that this flagged *ting* (here “market pavilion”) refers to the office of the officer supervising the market. For this text, see *Shiji* 13.506–7. Cf. Arbuckle 1995, esp. 588.
- 66 *Shiji* 126.3203.
- 67 *Shiji* 128.3228. Cf. Loewe 1988, esp. 86–88.
- 68 Such reasoning is also found in the scholasticism of the middle ages in Europe.
- 69 *Shiji* 128.3225.
- 70 NB: Elsewhere I have argued that Sima Qian was not an adherent of Five Phases speculations. Sometimes the term Wu Xing refers to the Five Planets. See van Ess 2006, esp. 88–98, 104.
- 71 *Hanshu* 75.3153–54; cf. Arbuckle 1995.
- 72 *Shiji* 60.2106.
- 73 I am inclined to think not that Wudi was loath to do this, but that to decline three times was conventional. For another view, see Loewe 2004, chap. 11, 401–20.
- 74 Xu Guang in a commentary says that one copy of the *Shiji* called it the sixth year of the reign period Yuanshou (122–117 BCE). See also *Shiji* 17.865.
- 75 *Shiji* 49.1981, without the name Li; *Hanshu* 63.2741.
- 76 *Shiji* 49.1981. This passage says that the mother of Dan and Xu died of grief because she no longer enjoyed the emperor’s favor.
- 77 *Shiji* 60.2113.
- 78 Wudi had six sons (*Hanshu* 63.2741): (1) the heir apparent Liu Ju, son of Empress Wei, b. 128, d. 91 BCE; (2) the future Zhaodi, probably b. 95 BCE; (3) Liu Hong, King of Qi, d. 109 BCE (*Hanshu* 63.2749), when still underage; (4) Liu Dan, King of Yan, Hong’s younger brother (*Hanshu* 63.2751), was in his late twenties or early thirties when Liu Ju rebelled in 91 BCE (*Shiji* 60.2118; *Hanshu* 63.2751); (5) the still younger Liu Xu, active mainly during Zhaodi’s reign (*Shiji* 60.2116; *Hanshu* 63.2760f); and (6) Liu Bo, King of Changyi, son of Lady Li (*Shiji* 49.1980), enfeoffed, according to *Hanshu* 63.2764, by 97 BCE, by which time much of the *Shiji* may have been finished. *Shiji* 130.3296 and 3300 report that Sima Qian began to compile his portion of the *Shiji* in 104 BCE and was castrated seven years later, after which he finished his masterwork.
- 79 Lü Shihao 2000, 5–6.
- 80 Sima Qian had discussed Wudi’s brothers in *Shiji* 59; their licentious behavior was disastrous for the dynasty.

- 81 Chu first states that Wudi wrote admonitions to his sons according to their personal “talents, strengths, intellect and abilities, as well as the hardness and softness of the soil of their respective kingdoms, and the size of their populations.” He then adds, in connection with Wudi’s warning to his sons: “What a worthy ruler creates is indeed nothing that those of shallow learning are able to know; it is something the meaning of which only superior men of broad learning and forceful character can fully penetrate. The order and sequence, the breaks and stops, what comes above and below in the text, and the passages of uneven length—all these have meaning that others cannot recognize.” See *Shiji* 60.2114.
- 82 In abbreviated form, this same story appears in Chu’s additions to *Shiji* 126.3209.
- 83 The language is not the same as in *Shiji* 129.3279, but it is also very negative about people from Qi.
- 84 *Shiji* 60.2116.
- 85 *Shiji* 60.1116.
- 86 This may support the idea that Chu Shaosun had not seen the text of Sima Qian that we have today.
- 87 According to *Shiji* 20.1067, this happened in or after 69 BCE.
- 88 In his explanation about the appointment of the King of Qi, Chu Shaosun argued that Qi was *not* a place conscientious about rites and duties (*Shiji* 60.2116).
- 89 Cf. *Shiji* 60.2118: “How could I have a younger brother who is alive? The one established now is a son of the commander-in-chief [Huo Guang]!”
- 90 *Shiji* 49.1985.
- 91 See *Hanshu* 6.155 for the dates of Emperor Wu. For the mistake of *yuanshi* for *taishi*, see *Hanshu* 97A.3956. Cf. *Hanshu* 68.2932.
- 92 *Shiji* 49.1975.
- 93 As some traditions (though not all) make King Cheng two or three years old, perhaps the *fu* here means that the Duke of Zhou carried the young king on his back. But if we follow the traditions that make King Cheng a young teenager, *fu* must mean “support.”
- 94 *Shiji* 49.1985.
- 95 *Shiji* 49.1985–86. See the translation in Watson 1974, 252–53n3.
- 96 *Shiji* 49.1986.
- 97 The meaning of the term *ru* generally depends upon context; sometimes it means “classicist” or even “antiquarian,” and sometimes “Confucian” (i.e., a dedicated follower of Confucius). Csikszentmihalyi and Nylan 2003 and Zufferey 2003 both argue that “Confucian” is not always a proper translation for *ru*.
- 98 The first time concerns Zhou Qingchen’s flattery of Qin Shihuangdi, which is answered by the Academician Chunyu Yue, who tells the emperor he would do better to enfeoff some relatives, if he wants Qin to maintain its grasp on power. Li Si then steps forward to say that this is a matter an “idiotic antiquarian” could understand; therefore, people should not listen to these so-called experts anymore; they should let the officials become their teachers (*Shiji* 6.254–55). Sima Qian clearly believed that Li Si was in error here. The second case is that of the minister Zhang Tang, who calls an Academician an “idiotic antiquarian” because the latter suggests that peace with the Xiongnu would be appropriate (*Shiji* 122.3141). Again, Sima Qian thought the epithet had been misapplied.
- 99 *Shiji* 122.3140.
- 100 *Shiji* 60.2118 says, “The senior officials wanted to bring harmony to those related by blood and did not want to harm him by the law.” Wudi’s senior officials may have urged lenience, but nevertheless it was his to withhold or bestow. In 87 or 86 BCE, when Liu Dan circulated rumors that the young Zhaodi was no son of Han Wudi (see n. 89 above). Zhaodi, like his father, did not want to make trouble, so he failed to execute Liu Dan. Later, in 80 BCE, Liu Dan again

- plotted rebellion, this time with Shangguan Jie (rival of Huo Guang) and the imperial secretary Sang Hongyang, after which Huo Guang finally forced him to commit suicide. According to Chu Shaosun, Liu Dan said, in 80 BCE, “I was next in precedence after the heir apparent [who died in 91 BCE]. Once that heir apparent had died, I should have been established [as rightful heir], but the senior officials as a group held me back” (*Shiji* 60.2119).
- 101 See Knoblock 1988–94, vol. 1, 137, citing *Xunzi*, chap. 1.
 102 *Shiji* 60.2120.
 103 *Shiji* 49.1981.
 104 See *Shiji* 125.3194–95, where the Empress Dowager, angered by Han Yan’s adultery, insists on Han’s execution.
 105 *Shiji* 126.3204. Wudi showered his wet nurse with gifts and even the extraordinary privilege of traveling in the lane of the imperial highway normally reserved for the emperor’s personal use. This act of signal generosity nearly cost the wet nurse her life, however, as it made her arrogant. When she and her family were sentenced to exile on the frontier to punish them for various crimes, the wet nurse managed to play on Wudi’s tender feelings for her, and instead Wudi “fined those whom he deemed to have slandered her.”
 106 *Shiji* 126.3205.
 107 *Shiji* 126.3206.
 108 Dongfang Shuo explained that a strange animal seen in one of the palace gardens was a good omen portending the surrender of a foreign power. One year later, as predicted, the Hunye King of the Xiongnu, together with a hundred thousand of his troops, surrendered to the Western Han court.
 109 *Shiji* 58.2089.
 110 *Shiji* 58.2090, 107.2839.
 111 *Shiji* 58.2090. Cf. *Shiji* 39.1935.
 112 Most famous, of course, is the case of Ji Zha in Wu; see Ruan Zhisheng 1994. Chu mentions two advisers whom Jingdi should have sent to teach his brother, Ji An and Han Changru. Ji belonged to the famous group of Huang-Lao officials whom Sima Qian admired very much. Ji An was also an enemy of the classically trained Chancellor Gongsun Hong, whom Sima Qian deplored. See van Ess 1993. Both Ji and Han also knew the “great ceremonies.”
 113 *Shiji* 58.2092.
 114 Loewe 1974, 31–90, gives an excellent account of the rebellion, based on the *Hanshu*.
 115 See, for example, Lu Yaodong 1994. The Witchcraft Affair is also known as *wugu*, or “witchcraft by worm vessels.”
 116 The four mentions are *Shiji* 110.2918, 111.2942, 2946, 128.3224. The second year of the Zhenghe reign period (91 BCE), the year of the rebellion, is mentioned in *Shiji* 18.930, 20.1032, 1034, 22.1143, 54. 2031.
 117 *Shiji* 128.3224. The backstory is this: Tian Ren was a friend of Ren An. Ren An came from Xingyang, the native place of the Chu family (*Shiji* 127.3221).
 118 *Shiji* 104.2780–81. Chu’s remark echoes similarly negative comments by Sima Qian about Wei, where Sima Qian commented that only twenty-four years elapsed between the rise and downfall of the Wei family members, which signified their inability to build a solid client network in anticipation of the day when Wei Zifu lost her charms. Sima Qian also reports that the Wei family had lost much of their standing even when General Wei Qing was still alive, as Wei’s last major campaign in 119 BCE was hardly a success. After Wei Qing’s death in 106 BCE, Wei’s eldest son was allowed to continue the line, but six years later he lost the fief because of an unspecified offense. See *Shiji* 111.2940, 2946. Table 20.1029 says that Wei Kang, Wei Qing’s eldest son, became marquis in 104 BCE, but it makes no mention of the fact that he lost the fief.
 119 *Shiji* 111.2929, 126.3208. This is one of the reasons why Lü Shihao believes that Chu Shaosun

- did not have access to the biography of Wei Qing that we possess today. See Lü Shihao 2009, 125n90.
- 120 Bielenstein 1980, 8.
- 121 *Shiji* 104.2782. See my translation and the discussion of the textual problems in Nienhauser 1994–present, vol. 8, 408.
- 122 *Shiji* 104.2783; compare my translation in Nienhauser 1994–present, vol. 8, 409.
- 123 The comment is, by the way, very similar to the one that Ban Gu made on the achievements of Sima Qian. Ban ends his final appraisal of Sima Qian by noting that Qian, for all his broad learning, was not able to avoid castration (*Hanshu* 62.2738). Ban then ends with an ironic quotation from the *Odes* (Mao no. 260): “Intelligent is he and wise / Protecting his own person.” Cf. Legge 1865–95, vol. 4, 543.
- 124 See *Shiji* 130.3310 for the single mention of these arts in connection with the achievements of Confucius.
- 125 See earlier in the chapter, around n. 21.
- 126 Lu Yaodong 1994.
- 127 *Hanshu* 86.3610; Pokora 1981, 410–11. See also nn. 66 and 67.
- 128 The first was Wang Feng, who succeeded Wang Jin; the second, in 33 BCE, her younger brother Wang Chong; in 27 BCE, her half brothers Wang Tan, Wang Shang, Wang Li, Wang Gen, and Wang Fengshi (*Hanshu* 98.4016, 4017, 4018); in 22 BCE, Wang Yin (*Hanshu* 97.4024) and then finally, as Man’s heir, Wang (*Hanshu* 97.4026). Except for Jin, Feng, and Yin, these Wang marquises are not listed in the *Hanshu* table section (*Hanshu* 84.2784–85). Were they omitted because the author of these tables, probably Ma Xu, elder brother of the famous Ma Rong (79–166 CE), considered them illegitimate? On Ma Xu’s work see *Shitong*, “Waipian,” *ce* 3, *juan* 12, “Gujin zhengshi,” 25, and *Hou Han shu* 84.2784–85.
- 129 *Hanshu* 30.1714.
- 130 Unfortunately, it is unclear whether the character *po* 頗 means “many” or just “some.”
- 131 *Hanshu* 30.1715. See the comments by Gu Shi 1987 (preface dated 1921), 65.
- 132 *Shitong*, “Waipian,” *ce* 3, *juan* 12, “Gujin zhengshi,” 25.
- 133 See Gu Shi 1987, 65.
- 134 There are grave doubts about the introduction to the “Treatise on Music.” On this, see Kern 1997, 31; 1999. Although there are certainly problems with the text, there are also arguments that suggest that this treatise must at least be earlier than the one contained in *Hanshu* 22. On this, see van Ess 2005, esp. 509 for more literature. Zhang Shoujie says, for example, that the text of the *Yueji* is not in its proper sequence because of the manipulations by Chu Shaosun (*Shiji* 24.1234); cf. *Shitong*, “Waipian,” *ce* 3, *juan* 12, “Gujin zhengshi,” 25, which has modified Ban Gu’s text on the missing ten chapters (see n. 43 above). *Shiji* 23.1173 contains a commentary by Zhang Shoujie, who says that Chu Shaosun took the “On the Rites” essay by Xunzi to compile this chapter. Similar statements exist regarding the treatises on the calendar and on the pitch pipes (*Shiji* 26.1287, 130.3319).
- 135 *Hanshu* 59.2657. It thus seems to me that Ban Gu saw Feng Shang’s additions and included in his own account those that he found useful and deleted others.
- 136 *Hanshu* 76.3239.

Afterword

NEW PERSPECTIVES AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Michael Nylan 戴梅可

THANKS IN LARGE PART TO THE INCREASING COOPERATION BETWEEN Euro-American and Chinese researchers in the highly complex task of interpreting the received texts in light of recent excavation reports, a host of new perspectives has arisen, querying the old verities, though the utility of such perspectives is still in the testing phase. The adoption of new research approaches (some requiring new methodologies) seems advisable, however, if scholars mean to deepen their understanding of early China in general and the two Han dynasties, Western and Eastern, in particular.

Methodological considerations alone should prompt the following:

(1) The disambiguation, wherever possible, of the two periods of Western and Eastern Han, if only because the two dynasties ran on very different institutional bases and assumptions, if the surviving records can be trusted. Better still, scholars could try to zero in on individual reigns during the Han dynasties, as this book has done, forsaking the “great man” preoccupation, which has focused on the Han founders and Han Wudi, who is sometimes miscast as conqueror extraordinaire when he never took to a single battlefield. While it is certainly true that trends and fashions seldom follow political periodization, Western Han deserves a finer-grained approach.

(2) Treatments of the history of the Chang'an capital regarding the city as but one facet of the larger monarchical system undergoing successive changes.

(3) More assiduous attention to the conventions of Han rhetoric, especially the highly conventionalized self-deprecating rhetorical expressions (“humilifics”) that are

still all too often read as literal expressions conveying significant “information” about the nature and functions of imperial rule, about gender relations, and about nomadic-agrarian relations.¹

(4) More sustained analysis of what might be called the capital’s “metaphysical topography,” meaning the symbolic associations attached to monuments and spaces within the region. No matter how extensive their lists of buildings and monuments, the sources praising the capital, beginning with the anonymous and somewhat unreliable *Sanfu huangtu* (*Plan of the Three Capital Regions*), in some sense belong to marvel literature,² though they are often taken as transparent depictions of quantifiable facts.

(5) Greater awareness of the significant distinction between “classicists” (*ru*), as a professional group claiming special expertise; official pronouncements or teachings (often inappropriately dubbed “Confucian” out of habit); and the small number of dedicated ethical followers of Kongzi (also *ru*), who also considered themselves students of the antique practices associated with the sages.

(6) Greater acknowledgment of the depth of administrative penetration into all corners of the realm during Western Han, given the 130,000 officials on the court’s payroll, resulting in a much higher ratio of officials to ordinary subjects than in late imperial China or in the Roman empire, for that matter. Up to now, historians have tended to presume a “thin” presence of the court outside the capital, but between powerful kings and their advisors, these direct court appointees, and the local members of the Bureaus of Merit, there are good reasons to posit a deeper governmental presence in the countryside.

For the near future, many of the best students of Han history will likely struggle with a series of new hypotheses. These include:

(1) The conviction that little if any can be explained about early China by inferences drawn from the views and practices of late imperial China. When it comes to Western Han Chang’an and its immediate environs, for example, excavations show that this capital’s allocation and occupation of space was less determined by ideological preoccupations than capitals from later imperial times. That different experts in several fields cannot identify a single orientation for the city says a great deal, as does the somewhat ad hoc character of additions to and subtractions from a number of palace sites in the metropolitan region.

Unlike the late imperial dynasties of Song through Qing that had their civil service examination systems, in Western Han the primary entrance routes to government office came through positions acquired through inheritance and local recommendation. No less striking are the divergences from the law codes of late imperial China glimpsed in the motley assortment of casebooks, laws, statutes, and edicts from Qin and Western Han from the Shuihudi, Zhangjiashan, and Liye manuscript caches.³ In all likelihood, no unified law code existed in Western Han. And most certainly, the laws presupposed smaller household units in which women could assume the legal status of head and inherit or dispose of property.⁴ Relatedly, no firm evidence to date has located family cemeteries for non-noble families during Qin and Western Han.⁵

Unlike the Yuan, Ming, and Qing autocratic rulers, no Western or Eastern Han ruler sought to impose an orthodoxy. Instead Han rulers repeatedly went on record saying that the court's interests were best served by patronizing as many older traditions as possible, capturing them all as in a net.⁶ Of course, that belief did not prevent visionaries, one after the other, from deriving elaborate systems from the antique texts at their disposal. Kongzi was rising in stature, but he by no means constituted the sole authority to be appealed to when judgments were to be rendered. Nor was the influence of Buddhism felt in Western Han; religious Daoism, as scholars know, dates from ca. 150 CE. One need not belabor such points, for even this truncated summary of some of the dramatic differences separating the early from late empires in China suggests the dangers of retrojecting social conditions or ways of thinking backward from the late imperial times onto Qin and Han.

(2) A realization that historians of China, given to moralizing explanations and presupposing the purportedly heavy "weight of tradition," have paid little attention to identifying one or more "social glues" that bound regions and disparate groups in the Western Han realm. Roman historians have long assumed that many groups in the Roman empire (illiterates and those claiming different ethnicities, for example) would never have embraced the idea of Romanness, had it not been for the ubiquitous presence of Roman emperors' heads on coins and of Roman emperors' statues in the forums of every major town.⁷ Some members of the Han court beheld examples of coins bearing such images from the Mediterranean empires,⁸ and they were not going to imitate the foreigners' willingness to put their leader's images on surfaces liable to casual handling. It behooves us to ask, then, whether features of the Western Han visual world, consciously or inadvertently, might have promoted a notion of "unified" empire in Western Han, prior to widespread literacy and the intrusive herding mechanisms deployed by states in more modern times. I speculate that the ubiquitous ornamental roof tile ends (*wadang*) and towergates (*que*) identifying every administrative site in Western Han might have fostered that sense of belonging among Western Han subjects, whether literate or not (see Fig. I.06b; cf. Fig. I.12);⁹ at the same time, I question the inherent plausibility of monocausal explanations for complex early identities. Put another way, contra the "common wisdom" that assumes an enduring sense of Chinese identity from Neolithic times and a concomitant identification with ruling houses, we may ask how far the majority of the population would have cared (or even been aware) that the tax collector represented the court and ruling house.

(3) A growing awareness of the direct contribution eventually made to coherent identities by libraries, as opposed to archives. By definition, archives store documents of *immediate use* to those governing (e.g., reports on the workings and welfare of the capital, commanderies, and counties, military maps, tax registers, technical manuals, and so on), whereas libraries seek the sorts of texts thought capable of edifying members of the governing elite: principally, in Western Han, the classics, masterworks, and *fu* poems.¹⁰ It is hardly coincidental, given Chengdi's training in classical learning and

love of rhetorical flourishes, that his court assembled a group of immensely erudite and rhetorically adept men, who in innovative ways embraced a common agenda for the reform of court practices on the model of “antiquity” (real and invented).¹¹ Nor is it an accident that many of those same men commanded sufficient expertise in the most demanding of the technical arts (astronomy, mathematics, and philology), so that they could put classical learning on a brand-new footing.¹²

Even in the case of the less technical medical classics, the Han and immediately post-Han medical writers would not necessarily have adopted the “genealogical mode,” had it not been for the imperial library project whose name this book bears.¹³ The formation of the imperial library collections seem equally responsible for the birth of a new form of rhetoric in *fu*, in memorials, and in commentaries laden with classical allusions in Chengdi’s era, devised by the very men engaged in collating in the imperial libraries.¹⁴ The rather sudden appearance of this new rhetorical style (certainly not in evidence during Wudi’s reign) is yet one more reason to query the standard account of classicism given in nearly all textbooks, Western and Chinese, that still erroneously dates the “classical turn” to Han Wudi’s reign on the basis of historian Ban Gu’s own propagandistic retrojections backward.¹⁵ It also reminds us that this classicism, in substance and in style, presented a new repertoire of possibilities that mobilized, shaped, and remade the processes associated with scholarly endeavors, good governance, ethical action, and notions of responsibility.

(4) A willingness to distinguish, however belatedly, the habits, oral and written, that are endemic to manuscript cultures from the social practices of the text that are more typical of print cultures. Compositional styles varied greatly in the two different cultures, for one thing, and the preferred compositional method during Western and Eastern Han, known as *juwen* or *zhuiwen*, literally meant “making passages [from disparate texts] belong together.”¹⁶ The use of that compositional style has huge implications, most importantly that modern notions of “author” or “editor” (not to mention discrete genres or disciplines such as “history” or “philosophy”) shed little light on the processes of creation or early reception of the highly performative manuscripts, given the frequency of ad hoc alterations made in the absence of professional standards and professional institutions.¹⁷

A serious implication is that not all passages in a given text should be accorded equal weight, because some have been inserted mainly to demonstrate erudition and authority through textual mastery (oral or written), rather than to advance a rigorously logical argument. Fact-laden arguments, after all, might require a would-be adviser to furnish details that would preclude acceptance of the very argument he was pushing, and elegant composition disdained extensive direct citation from a single source while encouraging synthetic impulses. Then, too, compilers of texts and listeners alike were wont to use *copia*—repetitions and elaborations of a theme—to highlight essential points, while constructing arguments in such a way as to allow for plausible deniability, should the powerful reject their stated views. For all the

foregoing reasons, undue stress should not be placed on the Han thinkers' frequent resort to "mixed" messages or even "illogicality" when weighing in on a variety of issues; instead we moderns should expect shifting frames of reference even for the same vocabulary items.¹⁸

(5) A dawning realization that different emperors deployed the built environment of the capital and its environs in different ways to advertise their distinctive visions of imperial power. (Here the work of Tonio Hölscher has paved the way, with his erudite studies of Greek and Roman cities, cults, and festivals.)¹⁹ That it took well over a century for the first Han empire to settle upon orderly plans for altars for conducting the imperial sacrifices and for the arrangement of imperial mausoleums should not surprise as, as Rome was hardly built in a day. (Few of Rome's most imposing structures date to Augustus's reign.)²⁰ That said, in memory cultures, architecture played a special role in mapping and sorting memories, individual and collective; this so increased its power that one early authority opined, "Places have so great a power of suggestion that the technical art of memory is with good reason based on them."²¹ Moreover, the physical form of the capital city was presented, in text after text, as an index of imperial power, in texts redolent of marvel literature.

(6) A willingness to move beyond rerecording the lives of the highest-ranking elites known from the standard histories. A rewriting of Loewe's classic *Everyday Life in Early Imperial China during the Han Period*,²² written nearly fifty years ago, is overdue, if only because of the many excavated "local" documents at our disposal today. One of the most exciting recent developments in Western Han Chang'an archaeology has resulted from the ongoing work conducted by three archaeologists on small to medium-sized tombs in the capital region, as such work gives us for the first time a better indication of the sort of objects used by non-noble families in the capital and its environs, above-ground as well as below.²³

Of particular interest to those interested in Chengdi's reign, these archaeologists have isolated the main types of objects consigned to capital tombs during late Western Han, while noting a constellation of changes, both in tomb layouts and in the selection of grave goods.²⁴ For example, it was in late Western Han that there first appeared several types of bronze mirrors (e.g., bronze mirrors sporting flower patterns; those with Four-Nipple, Birds, and Beasts patterns; the so-called TLV mirrors; etc.); also glazed pottery granaries with flaring shallow roofs or stamps at the shoulder in the form of water plants, and a new type of *zun* (wine or water vessel). At the same time, excavations of the small to midsized tombs in late Western Han yield noticeably fewer pottery imitations of ritual vessels—a development curiously at odds with the illustrious "return to antiquity" movement gaining momentum right then at the court.²⁵ No less importantly, late Western Han Chang'an, specifically the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, is the first time that the Chang'an tomb layout features brick tombs; couples buried together in the same tomb; and barrel-vaulted ceilings—three trends that continue during the Xin and Eastern Han dynasties.

This type of sorting of tomb layouts and artifacts enlarges our ability to imagine life in the Chang'an capital during Chengdi's reign. More generally, if we employ the visual culture of the subelites as a historical source to reconstruct the social values of these urban residents, we may come to understand better just who the Chang'an county and city residents were in Western Han. Reference to the methodologies and questions that appear in a spate of extremely good recent books devoted to "ordinary" and "middle-class" Romans offer guidance, as we in the early China field attempt to tie the economic underpinnings of ancient cities to the archaeology of tombs and their changing styles of décor and layout.²⁶ Accurate dating of cultural innovations, for instance, the first appearance of the so-called TLV mirrors,²⁷ will help us date, in turn, certain ideas much more precisely.²⁸

It remains to be seen whether there was an identifiable "middle class" in antiquity, since the notion of "class" does not merely point to a nebulous social space between rich and poor, but rather connotes individuals sharing similar economic opportunities and similar social and cultural conditions (among commoners, for instance, public self-images and pronouncements emphasizing the dignity of work).²⁹ The early sources do not lend themselves to certain kinds of modern inquiries, insofar as they tend to describe people mainly in terms of social status and legal rank. Moreover, the early sources are wont to dismiss as another sign of moral corruption some of the new social realities of Qin and Western Han, which allowed some imperial favorites or rich businessmen to exert more power and influence at court or in society-at-large than the members of the regular bureaucracy with pretensions to birth and erudition.

(7) A new understanding of the Western Han court as bound by precedents and more "consultative" than autocratic, with senior advisors to the throne routinely drawn from the consort clans or from families that had intermarried with them.³⁰ (See, for example, Vankeerberghen's chapter describing the so-called council meeting convened to decide who would be heir to Chengdi.)³¹ Twentieth-century historians invariably cast the consort clans not as allies of the throne but as selfish forces intent upon subverting the ruling line,³² since they extrapolate backward from the *Hou Hanshu* (*History of the Later Han*) accounts for late Eastern Han.³³

As several of the chapters in this volume attest, however, during Western Han no one would have tarred all consort clans as a group with the same brush. The Grand Empress Dowager Wang Zhengjun (see chapter 8 in this volume) gave impressive proofs of her loyalty to the ruling line, rather than to her clansmen. Nor was the downfall of Western Han inevitable by the year of Chengdi's untimely death (see the appendix on the rise of the Wangs, in Tang Xiaofeng's chapter). Also relevant is the latest scholarship on Tang, which suggests that dense marriage networks existed among the capital elites, with the resulting "lock" on the highest offices by those same elites. Judging from the more abundant evidence from Tang, this was an accepted fact of life; certainly, the dense marriage alliances were not considered a factor contributing to dynastic weakness during the long centuries of the Tang period.³⁴

Current scholarship on Rome no longer casts factional disputes as the sole or even the chief engine driving Roman policy making, though talk of political factionalism still propels many, if not most, inquiries in the early China field.³⁵ The scholarship on Rome—being less inclined to moral pronouncements than Gibbon, or most of today’s scholars in East Asia, for that matter—poses the crucial question, What features of the empire encouraged members of the governing elite to ‘buy into’ the new imperial order? The key role of continual gift exchanges in the maintenance of sociable ties is seldom adequately acknowledged, despite the abundance of evidence for it in our sources. To cite one stunning figure: by one assertion, the Han throne spent one-third of the emperor’s privy purse annually on gifts to clients and retainers; one-third on the upkeep of the ancestral shrines (construed as gifts to the ancestors); and one-third on the building of impressive mausoleums for members of the ruling house (gifts to nobles, ministers, and favorites).³⁶ Even if this ratio is only approximately correct, it says a great deal.

If early China historians would take their cues from a number of good recent books,³⁷ they would become better informed about the changing family structures among elites. They would moreover understand the necessity to begin with the basics: in Western Han, members of elite groups could claim as many as four types of status: orders of honor (*juewei*), bureaucratic rank (*guanliao diwei*), social status (*jiating shenfen*), and economic class (*jieji chabie*). These four types of status did not coincide, though clearly they often overlapped. So what served to bring these Chang’an elites together and what roles did each type play in advising on policy matters, aside from marriage alliances? Were members of one group supposed to make distinctive contributions to the empire or not? I suspect that the merely rich were expected to contribute to the imperial and noble coffers, in return for introducing their daughters into the mix, as families, including the imperial family, identified a need for ready cash. Getting answers about the reliability of such suspicions is not any less important, if, as seems likely, a shortage of funds hardly explains most policy decisions in late Western Han. (See the introduction’s appendix.)

Finds like the calling cards and daybooks at Yinwan signal the importance of alliances within the propertied classes of would-be and actual bureaucrats; both sets of materials express deep anxieties about initiating or breaking off social contacts. Much more could and should be done with assessing the horizontal ties between friends, colleagues, and allies, a subject nearly overlooked by China historians, if not by those of classical Greece and Rome.³⁸ How were enduring ties between different individuals, families, and occupational groups formed and maintained? Obviously, the same general “push-pull” factors attested in other early societies were at work in Western Han: the virtues of cooperation with other families and fellows, intended to ensure the reliable provision of emergency aid (a “positive reciprocity”), were offset by imperatives to selfishly push the needs of one’s own person and inner circle, even if such a push threatened those just beyond the immediate circle of intimates. The result was a com-



FIG. A.01 Five wooden tablets signifying five gods from a Chu tomb at Baoshan (Zhangguo period). Reproduced, with permission from Wenwu chubanshe, from *Baoshan Chu mu*, 10–14, plate 47.

plicated network of mutual expectations about refined sociability, but equally flagrant habits of strife were expressed in such antisocial behavior as boastfulness or arrogance or greed, as sycophancy or untrustworthiness (often cast as despicable cowardice or deceitfulness), or simply as ill temper and lack of equanimity, that hallmark of refined behavior. More research is needed if we are to analyze precisely how this push-pull operated in early China.

(8) A greater hesitation to see the nested Chang'an city walls as a “human cage,” as a transparent reflection of the state’s power and authoritarian control, or as a parasitical “consumer city” rather than a producer site.³⁹ As Patricia Crone notes in her work on pre-industrial societies, early empires did not aspire to totalitarian control, for the simple reason that such control was unthinkable before the invention of several modern technologies.⁴⁰ (This observation, needless to say, handily makes a hash of the standard view about the dastardly “totalitarian” First Emperor of Qin, seeing that view as a carefully crafted product of successive waves of propaganda efforts from late Western Han to the Mao era.)⁴¹ Recent research into Western Han religion and philosophy suggests that most early residents found wards locked at night preferable to disturbances by vagrant populations and attacks by robbers (Fig. A.01).

One might compare the Western Han conception of the body’s architecture, which prefers “an outer shell that is hard, firm, and solid”—and so impervious to assaults from outside—or indeed, the preference among not a few modern groups for gated communities barred to outside intruders.⁴² Meanwhile, the many markets and factories in the capital, on the one hand, and the court’s stupendous acts of largesse, on the other, surely contributed materially to the economy of the metropolitan Chang’an region in Western Han, making the city anything but a parasitical consumption site constrained by row upon row of barriers and walls.⁴³

(9) A further desire to explore the Western Han dynasty's provisions for social welfare, as one possible sign of the late Western Han court's aspirations. As noted above, the excavated laws and received texts attest the distributions (irregular) to commoners of all ranks (see the introduction's appendix); one of the last major initiatives undertaken by the late Western Han court was to set up two hundred residences to house poor people in five wards.⁴⁴ Chengdi dispatched five hundred boats in his navy specifically to help evacuate the poor from flooded areas.⁴⁵ Calls to limit landholdings were frequent, and some attempts were made to forgive debts and to parcel out lands and houses to poor commoners in less desirable locations (not only the frontiers but also lands in the interior that were ripe for reclamation), even if little was done to curb the acquisition of large estates by the court's most favored members. (Push-pull occurred at the very highest levels of court and society, apparently.)

(10) The sense that further analysis must be done to assess the higher rates of urbanization reported for Western Han versus Rome. The tax registration figures from Chengdi's reign (postdated to 2 CE) do not stipulate which populations were being counted; in addition, many people probably traveled some distance to administrative centers to pay their taxes, to report changes in household registration, to seek justice, and so on. As a result, the registered population given for an administrative seat may include a number who did not reside within the city walls or its suburbs. How much the distances from walled cities affected people's sense of urban life and of the city cultural amenities is a topic we have barely begun to explore, though Huang Yijun's chapter in this volume represents a first step in this exciting direction. In Rome, of course, the early development of mortar and concrete allowed the construction of five- and six-story tenements, but the wooden architecture of Chang'an did not lend itself to much above one story, in which case the major cities must have had very widespread suburbs.⁴⁶

(11) The necessity to revise dramatically what we once thought we knew about gender history: the mural tomb at Ligong University is but one of the many pieces of evidence illustrating the stark differences between Western Han treatments of women and those from late imperial China. In those murals, for instance, elite women sit in front of the screen (not behind it), enjoying the banquet with elite men, while richly garbed women join in the hunt with their male counterparts. No less importantly, some of the newly discovered mural tombs in the Chang'an area (for instance, the mural tomb at Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park) bespeak warm family relations, despite or because of high mortality rates.

(12) A likely shift in focus from the standard histories' *Basic Annals* and biographical sections, which have hitherto received the lion's share of attention (because they are nearly all translated?) to the tables, treatises, and Hereditary Houses sections. On what basis, for example, can we be sure that the "Table on the Officers and Ministers" in the *Hanshu* (*History of the Han*) differs from the highly idealized account of administration offered in the *Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*)?⁴⁷ And what conceivable purpose did the truly bizarre "Table on Figures, Ancient and Modern" included in the

same standard history serve? Calendars issued in different localities in different eras greatly complicate study of some of the tables and treatises, as does reference to Liu Zhiji's (661–721 CE) highly idiosyncratic yet authoritative *Shitong* (*Thorough Discussion of History*) (completed 710 CE).

. . .

The correlation of excavated materials and received texts has already prompted preliminary work tracing the relation between the Western Han capital and the so-called Five Capitals from the pre-unification period, not to mention the rest of the Han empire and beyond (see Map 3.05).⁴⁸

Most students of Han history have compiled a long wish list of subjects they would like to know more about, beginning (in this author's case) with the capital's neighborhoods,⁴⁹ but absent the discovery of a host of new inscriptions, small shrines, and altars, researchers in the field will doubtless have to "make do" with the undeniable riches we presently confront. Few historians try to explain why people in any era acquire and keep certain things and ideas. This book would move readers in that direction.

Notes

- 1 To take three examples: Han rhetoric required officials to submit certain kinds of information on pain of death. Similarly, women and men of the governing elite tended to elaborately underplay their status, authority, and specific qualifications when crafting rhetorical appeals; they were, after all, writing for relatively small textual communities composed of people like themselves already "in the know." This phenomenon is well known in Latin and early medieval literatures, and scholars in those fields do not read their texts so literally. A third example: nearly all prefaces to early and middle-period works in classical Chinese emphasize that the writings would be out of circulation were it not for the preface writer's "rediscovery" of the text. Some have assumed this rhetorical trope to be literally true, despite the availability of abundant counterevidence in many cases. On the cherry-picking of evidence that still passes for good scholarship, see Nylan 2012, on "barbarians."
- 2 Compare the comprehensive regional catalogues for Rome known as the *Notitia* and *Curiosum*, said in Edwards 1996, 98 (citing Purcell) to partake of the "rhetoric of number" to parade Rome's domination of the world. Further compare Pliny's remark (translated in Edwards 1996, 97) that Rome's monuments were so numerous that "if all this were massed together and heaped up into one mound, its size would rise as great as if the whole other world were being described in one place." (Here the play of words on *urbs*, "city," and *orbis*, "world," is clear.)
- 3 For Liye, see Chen Wei 2012.
- 4 See Nylan 2010a.; Zhang Zhaoyang 2010. The best work on Liye to date is by Charles Sanft. Michael Loewe has never presupposed the existence of a single systematic law code in Han, and the current evidence backs him up, contra Yates 2011. There are some indications that an attempt to systematize the laws was made as Eastern Han was collapsing.
- 5 Li Qing 2003, 211, notes that in the whole society, "clan consciousness was not deep" (*zongzu guannian yiban bu nonghou*), contrary to most scholars' assumptions. Interestingly, however, whereas the Roman poor were cremated and placed in unmarked urns, if their carcasses were not pitched into mass graves, a surprising number of the Han graves of convict and corvée

- laborers were marked by simple shards with the names of the deceased scratched on (perhaps to avoid angry ghosts who could induce contagion?). On this, see Zhang Xiangyu 2010.
- 6 The language of orthodoxy is more correct for late imperial China, where one may speak of dominance by the True Way Learning advocates, sponsored by the Yuan, Ming, and Qing courts, but it bears repeating that no one was persecuted for their beliefs in early China, so far as we know, only for their practices.
- 7 Zanker 1988.
- 8 See *Shiji* 123.3162, which has the explorer Zhang Qian describing foreign coins bearing the image of the king's face; cf. *Hanshu* 96A.3885. These gold and silver coins depicting a mounted rider on one side and a human head on the reverse came from Jibin (Alexander's Bactria?). Cf. Thierry 2012; Chin, forthcoming, esp. chap. 2.
- 9 Loewe (personal communication, August 2013) suggests that one way of creating an identity with the literate (not the illiterate) may have been the use of *nianhao*, or "reign period names."
- 10 Jacob and Polignac 2000; Nylan 2011b. Archives date back to the pre-imperial period in China, whereas libraries do not, so far as we know. I have learned a great deal from Drège 1988; Hanke 2005.
- 11 This does not mean to imply that learned experts had not gathered at various Qin and Han courts before this time to discuss policy matters, only that never before had these learned men shared a common reform agenda.
- 12 For Yang Xiong's attempts in this direction, see Nylan 2011b, esp. pt. 4; for those of Yang's contemporary Liu Xin, see Gao Jiyi 2009.
- 13 This is argued in Miranda Brown's chapter in this volume.
- 14 This new form of rhetoric has been discussed by Wang Qicai 2009, who does not discuss reasons for its relatively abrupt emergence, however. A paper I prepared for a volume in honor of Sir Geoffrey Lloyd shows that a similar rhetoric followed in the wake of the classicists' efforts at Alexandria's library.
- 15 See Nylan 2008a, 2008b, 2011b, for details.
- 16 Often wrongly characterized as a "scissors-and-paste" method, *juwen* practices required the virtuoso's deftness in deploying vast stores of erudition for maximum effect. Long ago Andrew Plaks brought to my attention the phenomenon whereby passages are brought together in close conjunction in an argument simply on the basis of a coincidence of graphic form or sound. At the same time, it should not be necessary to insist that Chinese compilers can be rigorously logical, when they choose to employ logic for a particular end. The line of logical thinkers in early China would include Xunzi, Zhuangzi, Hui Shi, Han Feizi, the later Mohists, Yang Xiong, Huan Tan, Wang Chong, and Zhang Heng. But none of these thinkers chooses to employ the rules of logic throughout all his corpus of writings, since all the thinkers aimed to elicit patronage with the members of the governing elite. One book moving in the right direction on rhetoric is Olberding 2012. For more information on compositional styles, see Nylan 2014.
- 17 On this, see Lloyd and Sivin 2002.
- 18 On "syncretism": even those who intended to devise a single coherent standard made no bones about borrowing from other great thinkers. See, for example, Yang Xiong's *Fayan* 4.26, cited in Wang Rongbao 1933, 6/134. On human nature, see Sahlins 2008. One of the best treatments of early manuscript culture is Richter 2013.
- 19 See Hölscher 2004.
- 20 See Clarke 2003; Ewald and Noreña 2010. Note Michael Loewe's view that while it is just possible that the Zhaomu principle was observed in the early decades of Western Han, it may be seen with greater certainty in the imperial tombs for Yuandi (d. 33 BCE) and his successors (personal communication, August 2013).
- 21 See Edwards 1996, 29, for this translation of Piso's observation.

- 22 Loewe 1968.
- 23 *Sanyang zhuang Han dai yizhi* 2007, a *neibu* report (“for internal circulation only”) detailing the excavation of a Han residential dwelling, is likewise of great interest, though it shows a dwelling in Henan Province rather than in the capital region.
- 24 Han and Zhang 2011. Chai Yi, a younger colleague of Zhang’s, is working with Zhang on a future summary of excavated tombs and artifacts. Zhang Xiangyu has also recently written an essay on small to midsized tombs, which makes for interesting comparisons. That essay appears in the otherwise misleadingly titled volume *Handai chengshi he juluo kaogu yu Han wenhua* (*Archaeology of Han Dynasty Urban Spaces and Settlements and Han Culture*).
- 25 Commoners’ tombs in the Chang’an area preferred objects alluding to daily life, including urns, jars, model granaries, and model stoves.
- 26 Three of the best are Clarke 2003; Knapp 2011; and Mayer 2012.
- 27 On the TLV mirrors, see Loewe 1979, 60–85; and, more recently, Tseng 2011, esp. chap. 3.
- 28 If the model offered by Mayer 2012, 19, works for Western Han Chang’an, the key to this economy was not increased local demand but rather an increase in specialized forms of production. Mayer’s hypothesis would seem to tally neatly with *Shiji* 129, devoted to “Assets Accumulating.” See Nylan, forthcoming a.
- 29 On this see Ewald and Noreña 2010, on which this language draws.
- 30 For consultative government, see Giele 2006; and the translation of the Gu Yong memorial in chapter 11 of this volume, which shows an unexpected willingness to harshly criticize the reigning emperor, with little fear of the consequences, apparently (compare Loewe’s remarks on Chengdi in chapter 8). For typical continuities within the Western Han consort clans, one might consider the following example: Empress Xu of Xuandi “died early” and was buried at Duling, his mausoleum town. Her relation then became Chengdi’s dearly beloved Empress Xu, whom Chengdi’s court forced him to put aside when she remained childless after years of cohabitation.
- 31 Vankeerberghen cites *Hanshu* 81.3354–55; cf. Nylan’s “Administration of the Family,” in Nylan and Loewe 2010. Empress Xu “died early,” according to the sources, because she was murdered while pregnant by a member of the rival Huo family. For a typical treatment of *waiqi*, see Yang Shuda [1955] 1984, *juan* 1, 77.
- 32 See, for example, *Du Tongjian lun*, comp. Wang Fuzhi, repr. 1975, 117. Wang Fuzhi excoriated Dowager Empress Wang an as “old [interfering] ill omen woman” (*lao yao*) who deserved the blame for the collapse of Western Han rule for manipulating Chengdi in the name of “filial duty.”
- 33 As is well known, during late Eastern Han the *waiqi* and eunuchs, sometimes in alliance and sometimes in opposition, seemed to be in open warfare with the so-called pure officers (would-be and actual) leading the bureaucracy.
- 34 See Tackett 2014, chap. 3. There is no sign from *Hanshu* 97A–B (the biographies of the most famous consort clan ladies) that the *waiqi* are condemned as an institution; only that some in the group act well and some do not act in ways conducive to the health of the emperor and the body politic.
- 35 See especially Millar 1998, introduction.
- 36 *Jinshu* 60.1651.
- 37 Among the best books are Feng Erkang 1998; Li Qing 2003; and Zhao Pei 2002, though they do not always agree in their analysis.
- 38 See Williams 2012, for example, on Roman friendship; or Konstan 1997.
- 39 See, for example, Zhang Jihai 2006, 147. Private communication (2012) with Zhang suggests that he no longer holds this view, but many in China do.
- 40 See, for example, Crone 2003, *passim*. Admittedly, we may not have overestimated the state’s desire for control during the late imperial dynasties, especially those that ruled by conquest.

- 41 See Nylan, forthcoming b. In general, one has to wonder just how invasive was the presence of government, outside of its chosen administrative seats.
- 42 See Poo 1998; Nylan 2008b. Cf. Elizabeth Hsu 2010, 30, which speaks of “a body conception that positively values the maintenance of one’s body form as an outer shell that is hard, firm, and solid.”
- 43 Several archaeological reports describe the handicraft industries centered on Chang’an city and county as well, the best being Li Yufang 1996. Furthermore, recall that the resources of Shanglin Park (see Map 4.01) brought the throne some 70 million in cash, a stupendous sum that purportedly paid for the entire “defense” of the far west (see appendix to chapter 1).
- 44 Hulsewé 1987.
- 45 *Hanshu* 29.1688.
- 46 Rafe de Crespigny deserves thanks for this reminder. The major Chang’an palaces had to be built around earthen cores, so that they would appear to be more than one story tall.
- 47 Michael Loewe remarks: “To me there is a real basis for a difference, in that *Hanshu* tables (except for 20) reproduce archive material made for practical purposes, while *Zhouli* sets out to be idealized theory” (personal communication, August, 2013). I am less sure that the line between genres is so clear.
- 48 We have a few figures for the length of time needed for official postal dispatches exchanged between the capital and the frontier zones. See, for example, Zang Rong 2009, 42; Loewe 1967, vol. 1, 43–44. Relations between the metropolitan region and Longxi Commandery are the subject of Liu Junkang 2011; those between Chang’an and Sichuan (esp. Chengdu) are the subject of Liang Zhongxiao 2010 and Yang Min 2011. These studies are rather preliminary. Sichuan and Chang’an wealth are closely linked in *Hou Hanshu* 40A.1338.
- 49 Historians of Han can only envy the materials on the neighborhoods of Rome compiled and analyzed in Lott 2004.

GLOSSARY

Academician. See Boshi.

Advisory Counsellor. See Jian Dafu.

Aidi 哀帝. Emperor Ai of Western Han, r. 7–1 BCE; personal name Liu Xin 劉欣.

Altars to Soil and Grain. See Sheji.

An Han Gong 安漢公. Lord Securing the Han. Title given to Wang Mang in 1 CE.

An Men 安門. An City Gate, middle gate of the three southern gates.

Anding 安定. Name of ward within Lude city; also a Western Han dependent state; also a commandery where Ban Biao wrote his *Bei zheng fu*, in present-day Gansu.

Anling 安陵. Anling mausoleum of Huidi, north of Chang'an; Anling mausoleum town 安陵邑.

Annals. See *Chunqiu*.

anomaly. See *yi* 異.

Anping Hou 安平侯. Noble of Anping. Noble title posthumously held by Yang Chang (73 BCE), Yang Zhong (73–63 BCE), and Yang Tan (63–54 BCE).

antiquity-loving. See *hao gu*.

Ao Cang 敖倉. Ao Granary.

Ao Guan 敖關. Ao Pass.

Appended Phrases. See *Xici zhuan*.

Archaic Script. See Guwen.

Archivists' Record. See *Shiji*.

“area east of the passes.” See Guandong.

“area within the passes.” See Guanzhong.

Arsenal (sometimes translated as Armory). See Wu Ku.

Assistant. See Cheng.

Attendant He. See Yi He.

Auspicious Grain Granary. See Jia (or Jiahe) Cang.

Ba 霸. See Ba He; Baling; Bashang.

Ba Cheng Men 霸城門. Ba City Gate, southern-

most of the three eastern gates of Chang'an city.

Ba Gong 八宮. Eight Palaces hexagram sequence theory of Jing Fang, according to which hexagrams are linked to years.

“Ba guan” 八觀. “Eight Watchtowers” chapter in *Guanzi*.

Ba He 霸河. Ba River, runs east of modern Xi'an.

ba jiao liuli jing 八角琉璃井. Octagonal glass well.

Ba Shen 八神 or Ba Zhu 八主. Eight Gods or Eight Divine Hosts. Cult in pre-unification Qi, which continued in Qin and Western Han.

back palaces. See *hou gong*.

“Bai guan gong qing biao” 百官公卿表. “Table of Officers and Ministers.” Table in *Hanshu* 19.

Bai Hu Dian/Tong. See Bohu Dian.

Bai Liu Zhi Zai E 百六之災隄. Disasters in the 106th Year.

Bai Qu 白渠. White Canal.

Bai Xing 百姓. Hundred Clans.

baichan 百廛. Hundreds of shops; numerous smaller markets.

Bailuyuan 白鹿原. Site of cemetery in Xi'an area with early Western Han tombs.

Baiwan Shi Cang 百萬石倉. Million Bushel Granary.

baiyan 白燕. White swallow.

Bajiaolang 八角廊. Place in Dingzhou/Dingxian where Western Han royal tombs were found.

Baling 霸陵. Baling mausoleum of Wendi, in mountainous area to the southeast of Chang'an; Baling mausoleum town 霸陵邑.

Bamboo Palace. See Zhu Gong.

Ban Biao 班彪, 3–54 CE. Father of Ban Gu, started work on history of Western Han.

- Ban Gu 班固, 32–92 CE. Chief author of *Hanshu*.
- Ban Jieyu 班婕妤. Lady Ban, fl. 33–16 BCE.
Aunt of Ban Biao, who enjoyed the favors of Chengdi until the appearance of Zhao Feiyan.
- Ban Kuang 班況, fl. 20 BCE. Father of Chengdi's consort Ban Jieyu, moved to Changling mausoleum town before being forced to change his registration to Chang'an.
- Ban Zhao 班昭, ca. 48–120 CE. Sister of Ban Gu who was an accomplished author of technical treatises and political adviser in her own right.
- bao bian* 褒貶. Praise and blame, method of interpreting the *Chunqiu*.
- “Bao Ren Shaoqing shu” 報任少卿書. “Letter to Ren An.” Famous letter ascribed to Sima Qian, which discusses his filial duty to his father, the completion of *Shiji*, and the castration he suffered.
- Bao Si 褒姒, fl. eighth century BCE. A woman with whom one of the kings of Zhou became infatuated, leading to dynastic ruin.
- Bao Xi 炮犧. Alternative name for Fu Xi/Fuxi; title or name of a mythological emperor.
- Bao Xian 包咸, 6 BCE–65 CE. Commentator to the *Analects*.
- Bao'an Shan 保安山. Mount Bao'an.
- Bao-Xie Cao Qu 褒斜漕渠 Bao-Xie Road Transport Canal.
- Baoyuan taiping jing* 包元太平經. *Classic of Preserving the Prime and Great Peace*, by Gan Zhongke.
- Bashang 霸上. Place near Ba River.
- Bashiyi Nan* 八十一難. *Eighty-One Difficulties*, a.k.a. *Nanjing*.
- Basic Annals*. See *Benji*.
- basin. See *pen*.
- basin, broad. See *pan*.
- bawang* 霸王. Hegemons.
- Bei Chen 北辰. Northern Asterism. Stands for seat of imperial power.
- Bei Gong 北宮. “Northern Palace,” in Chang'an city.
- Bei Que 北關. Northern Towergate, of the Weiyang Palace.
- Bei Tang 北堂. North Hall.
- Bei zheng fu* 北征賦. “Northern Journey” *fu*, by Ban Biao.
- Beidi Jun 北地郡. Western Han commandery.
- Beihuan Li 北煥里. Beihuan Ward, in Chang'an city.
- Beiji Xing 北極星. Polestar, Polaris.
- Beikangcun 北康村. Site of cemetery with Western Han tombs near Xi'an.
- ben mo 本末. Roots and branches. Often refers to agricultural work (basic) versus industry and commerce (secondary).
- Benji* 本紀. *Basic Annals*. First section of the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*, recording events in the reigns of the Western Han emperors.
- bi* 比. Equivalent to. Prefix that indicates lowest grade within the stipulated salary level.
- Bi 比. “Unity,” hexagram 8.
- Bi Li 賁麗, fl. 7 BCE. Courtier with astrological knowledge.
- bi shi* 辟/避世. Withdrawal from the world.
- Bi Yuan 畢沅, 1730–1797 CE. Qing scholar and administrator who wrote several works on the “area within the passes” and left many stelae in the area identifying historical sites.
- bian* 變. Moving. Describes certain types of hexagram lines.
- Bian Fang 便房. Chamber of Ease. Ritual building on a mausoleum site, a.k.a. Bian Dian 便殿.
- Bian Que 扁鵲, n.d. A legendary physician, a.k.a. Qin Yueren 秦越人.
- “Bian Que Cang Gong liezhuan” 扁鵲倉公列傳. “The Biographies of Bian Que and the Granary Master.” Chapter 105 of *Shiji*.
- bianshi* 砭石. Stone needles.
- “Bibliographical Treatise.” See “Yiwen zhi.”
- Bielu* 別錄. *Separate Record*. Liu Xiang's catalogue of the manuscripts in the imperial library or libraries.
- bieshu gurou* 別疏骨肉. Alienation of blood relations.
- Bing Gao 丙高, first century BCE. Son of Bing Ji, held the post of Colonel of the Central Ramparts.
- Bing Ji 丙吉, d. 55 BCE. Served Xuandi as Chancellor from 59 BCE to his death in 55 BCE.
- bingjian* 并兼. Landholdings in noncontiguous sites.
- bingxu* 丙戌. Day 23 in the sexagenary cycle.

Biographies of Exemplary Women. See *Lienü zhuan*.

Biyong 辟雍. Circular Moat. Ritual building.
bo 伯. Local lord.

Bo 剥. “Peeling,” hexagram 23.

Bo Yu 伯禹. Title or name of the legendary founder of the Xia dynasty.

Bogao 伯高. Legendary healer of antiquity.

Bohu Dian 白虎殿. White Tiger Hall. Building in Weiyang Palace where Chengdi died.

Also the site of the conference on the classics held in 79 CE, whose proceedings are supposedly summarized in the *Bohu tong*.

Bohu tong 白虎通. *Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall*.

Boshi 博士. Academician.

box. See *he*.

Boyi 伯夷. Director of Ceremonial under Yao.

Breaking through the Mohist Defense. See *Fa Mo shou*.

Bright Hall. See Ming Tang.

bu 步. Step or “pace,” equal to about 1.5 meters.

bu 補. To supplement.

bu fu 不服. Not pleading guilty or admitting guilt.

bu jing 不敬. Lèse-majesté.

bu neng 不能. Could not act.

bu que 補缺. Fill in lacunae.

Bubing Xiaowei 步兵校尉. Colonel of Infantry. Title of an office in the Han central government.

burnt offering. See *yin* 禋.

bushel. See *shi* 石.

“Cai qi” 采芑. “Gathering White Millet,” no. 178 of the *Odes*, correlated with Wu 午 in the Five Junctures theory.

Cai Yong 蔡邕, ca. 133–192 CE. Author of “Harmonious Marriage” *fu*.

calendrical computation numbers. See *li shu*.

calendrical cycles. See *li yun*.

calendrical methods. See *li fa*.

Can 瓚. Probably Fu Can 傅瓚, fl. 28 CE.

Cang Chi 倉池. Reservoir Pond, in Weiyang Palace.

Cao 曹. One of the Central States in the Chunqiu period.

Cao Gong 曹宮, fl. 12 BCE. Daughter of a palace slave and mother of a son sired by Chengdi.

Capital Granary. See Jingshi Cang.

cash. See *qian*.

catacomb tomb. See *dongshi mu*.

catastrophe. See *zai*.

catastrophes and anomalies. See *zaiyi*.

ce 冊. Division of a book, smaller than a *juan*.

Central States. See Zhongguo.

ceshu 策書. Deed of investiture.

Chai Yi 柴怡. Xi'an archaeologist.

Chamber of Rest. See *qin dian*.

chan 諂. Sycophancy.

Chan He 滻河. Chan River, runs east of modern Xi'an.

Chancellor. See Chengxiang; Da Situ (after 8 BCE); Xiang.

cang 倉. Granary.

chang sheng wu ji 長生無極. Long life with no end.

Chang'an (*cheng*) 長安(城). Chang'an city (lit., Eternal Peace), area within the city perimeter walls, capital 202 BCE–23 CE.

Chang'an zhitu 長安志圖. *Illustrated Chang'an Gazetteer*, 1076 CE, by Song Minqiu.

Changdu 長杜. Name of ward within Lude city.

Changes classic. See *Yijing*.

Changle Gong 長樂宮. Changle Palace, in the southeast portion of Chang'an city.

Changling 昌陵. Changling mausoleum of Chengdi, under construction beginning 20 BCE, abandoned 16 BCE. Changling *xian* 縣 (county) was created when the Changling mausoleum was under construction.

Changling 長陵. Changling mausoleum of Gaozu, north of Chang'an; Changling mausoleum town 長陵邑.

Changman Cang 常滿倉. Ever-Full Granary. Of Wang Mang's era, in Chang'an.

Changping Cang 長平倉. Ever-Normal Granary or Ever-Level Granary. A granary set up at the frontier to store grain bought by the government at a high price when the market price was low, sold at a low price when the market price was high, per a proposal by Geng Shouchang enacted in 54 BCE; scholars dispute when or if these granaries were disbanded.

Changqing 長青. A modern town.

Changsang Jun 長桑君. Lord Changsang.

Changsha 長沙. Western Han kingdom.

- Changshi Ji 常侍騎. Regular Mounted Attendant.
- Changxin Gong 長信宮. Changxin Palace (lit., Eternal Trust Palace).
- Changyi 昌邑. Western Han kingdom.
- Changyin Li 昌陰里. Changyin Ward, in Chang'an city.
- Chanyu 單于. Title of the Xiongnu leader. See also Shanyu.
- Changzi 長子. Place name (in Shanxi) invoked in Liu Xin's *fu*; also a battle site in *Zuozhuan*.
- Chao Cuo 朝/晁錯, d. 154 BCE. Retrieved a copy of the *Documents* from Fu Sheng under Wendi; Imperial Counsellor under Jingdi.
- chaojin fa jia er hou chu* 朝覲法駕而後出. "At audiences of the court, depart only when the carriage is properly fitted out"; or "Only when the laws have been issued should you go out driving in your carriage."
- chapter and verse. See *zhangju*.
- chen*. See *chen tu*.
- Chen 陳. One of the Central States during the Chunqiu period.
- Chen Bao 陳寶. Treasures of Chen.
- Chen Nong 陳農, fl. 26 BCE. Worked under Liu Xiang on the imperial catalogue, with responsibility for lost literature.
- "Chen She shijia" 陳涉世家. "Hereditary House of Chen She," chapter 48 of *Shiji*.
- Chen Sheng 陳勝, d. 208 BCE. Started revolt against Qin in 209 BCE.
- Chen Tang 陳湯. Figure at the court of Chengdi and Aidi whose career rested upon his controversial decision call out troops in the Western Regions without authorization; he also proposed construction of tomb for Chengdi at Changling.
- chen tu* 讖圖. Apocryphal writings and esoteric diagrams; also *tu chen* 圖讖.
- Chen Yuan 陳元, fl. 30–40 CE.
- Cheng 丞. Assistant.
- Cheng Linquan 程林泉. Present-day archaeologist.
- Cheng Tang 成湯. Title of the founder of the Shang-Yin dynasty.
- Cheng Wang 成王. King Cheng of Western Zhou, r. 1042/35–1006 BCE.
- Chengdi 成帝. Emperor Cheng of Western Han emperor, r. 33–7 BCE; personal name Liu Ao 劉騫.
- Chengguo Qu 成國渠. Perfect-the-State Canal.
- Chengmen Xiaowei 城門校尉. Colonel of the City Gates.
- Chengxiang 丞相. Chancellor.
- Chengxiang Sizhi 丞相司直. Deputy to the Chancellor.
- Chengyang 城陽. Western Han kingdom; also a noble domain (in a different location) given to Zhao Lin.
- Chengyi Cang 潞邑倉. Chengyi Granary, known only from a *wadang* with the inscription "Chengyi Cao Cang" 潞邑漕倉, found in Xitou village, Xitou district, Pucheng county, Shaanxi.
- chenwei* 讖緯. Prophetic and apocryphal texts.
- Chi Jing Zi 赤精子. Red Essence, messenger who conveys the end of the Western Han ruling house's Mandate in Gan Zhongke's prognostication text.
- chidao* 馳道. Imperial highway, three-lane thoroughfare with center lane for exclusive imperial use.
- Chou 丑. Twelfth month.
- chu* 初. Inception.
- Chu 楚. One of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 223 BCE.
- Chu Cheng Men 廚城門. "Kitchen City Gate," middle gate of the three northern gates of Chang'an city, named after an imperial kitchen office (Chuguan 廚官) located nearby.
- Chu Da 褚大, fl. 119–110 BCE. Academician and Chancellor of the Kingdom of Liang.
- chu ling* 初陵. Preliminary tomb (or, tomb in preparation, tomb in waiting), tomb site of a reigning emperor before the site was officially designated as imperial tomb.
- Chu Shaosun 褚少孫. Probably the Master Chu (Chu Xiansheng) who wrote additions to *Shiji*.
- Chu Xiansheng 褚先生. Master Chu, fl. 50 BCE, author of additions to *Shiji*; used in the expression *Chu Xiansheng yue* 褚先生曰 "Master Chu said."
- Chu Yi jiazhuan* 褚顗家傳. *The Family Traditions of Chu Yi*.

chuanwen 傳聞. Transmitted hearsay.
Chuci 楚辭. Early poetry collection attributed to Qu Yuan 屈原, a poetry classic whose stature was comparable to that of the *Odes*.
Chui 捶. Artisan Master under Yao.
chun 春. Spring.
 “Chun Guan” 春官. “Spring Officers,” third part of *Rituals of Zhou*.
Chunhua 淳化. A present-day county.
Chunqiu 春秋. *Annals* classic, one of the Five Classics.
Chunqiu fanlu 春秋繁露. *Elegant Crown for the Annals*, ascribed to Dong Zhongshu.
Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhu 春秋公羊傳注. *Commentary to the Gongyang Tradition of the Annals*, by He Xiu.
Chunqiu Guliangzhuan jijie 春秋穀梁傳集解. *Collected Explanations of the Guliang Tradition of the Annals*.
Chunqiu Han yi 春秋漢議. *Han Discussions of the Annals*.
Chunqiu jueyu 春秋決獄. *Deciding Cases with the Annals*, by Dong Zhongshu.
Chunqiu waizhuan 春秋外傳. Source cited by Liu Xin.
Chunqiu yuanming bao 春秋元命包. *Original Allotment Guarantee of the Annals*.
Chunqiu Zuo shi zhuan 春秋左氏傳. Mr. Zuo’s *Tradition of the Annals*. See also *Zuozhuan*.
Chunqiu Zuozhu qi 春秋佐助期. *Cycles in Service to the Annals*.
Chunyu Chang/Zheng 淳于長, d. 8 BCE. Nephew of Wang Zhengjun, praised for his plea to abandon Changling, convicted of an attempt to help reinstate the deposed Empress Xu.
Chunyu Yi 淳于意, fl. ca. 180–154 BCE. Physician, a.k.a. the Granary Master.
Chuyuan 初元. Reign period, 48–44 BCE.
ci zang 賜葬. Conferred burials, land an emperor donates to high-ranking members of the court near the chosen site for his own burial.
 Circular Moat. See *Biyong*.
Cishi 刺史 Regional Inspectors, appointed beginning 106 BCE to oversee a group of commanderies and kingdoms. See also *Zhoumu*.
Cishi Men 磁石門. Magnet Gate.

citang 祠堂. Offering shrine.
Classic of Preserving the Prime and Great Peace. See *Baoyuan Taipingjing*.
cliques. See *pengdang*.
Collected Explanations of the Guliang Tradition of the Annals. See *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan jijie*.
 Commandant. See *Duwei* (for commandery); *Ji Duwei* (for cavalry); *Zhongwei* (for kingdom).
Commentary to the Gongyang Tradition of the Annals. See *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhu*.
 Commissioner of Agriculture. See *Da Sinong*.
 Commissioner of State Visits. See *Da Honglu*.
 Commissioner of the Guards. See *Weiwei*.
 Commissioner of the Imperial Clan. See *Zongzheng*.
 Commissioner of Trials. See *Tingwei*.
 compartmented wooden outer coffin. See *jing guo*.
 Concubine Li. See *Li Yi*.
 Confucius. See *Kongzi*.
 conscript servicemen. See *zu*.
 Core Han Culture. See *Hexin Han Wenhua*.
 council meeting. See *yi* 議.
 County Magistrate. See *Xianling*.
 Court Architect. See *Jiangzuo Da Jiang*.
 Courtier. See *Lang*.
Cui Shu 崔杼, fl. 548 BCE. Committed regicide.
Cuizhu Yuan 翠竹園. Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park, site in Qujiangchi district of modern Xi’an where a mural tomb was discovered in 2008.
da bian 大變. Great change.
Da Honglu 大鴻臚. Commissioner of State Visits.
Da Jiangjun 大將軍. General-in-Chief.
Da Jiangjun Ling Shangshu Shi 大將軍領尚書事. General-in-Chief with Authority over the Secretariat.
 “Da ming” 大明. “Great Brightness,” no. 236 of the *Odes*, correlated with Hai 亥 in the Four Beginnings theory and Five Junctures theory.
Da ming 大明. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
da ru 大儒. Great classicist.

Da Shi 大師. Grand Music Master, office treated in the “Spring Officers” section of *Rituals of Zhou*.

Da Sikong 大司空. Imperial Counsellor, after 8 BCE member of the San Gong. See also Yushi Dafu.

Da Sima 大司馬. Marshal of State, after 8 BCE member of the San Gong.

Da Sinong 大司農. Commissioner of Agriculture, one of the Nine Ministers.

Da Sinong Zhong Cheng 大司農中丞. Assistant to the Commissioner for Agriculture.

Da Situ 大司徒. Director over the Masses; Chancellor, after 8 BCE.

Da yan 大衍. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.

da ye 大業. Great enterprise (of empire).

dachang 大常. A star(?).

Dachang Li 大昌里. Dachang Ward, in Chang’an city.

Dafu 大夫. Counsellor.

Dai Changle 戴長樂, fl. 61–56 BCE. Personal friend of Xuandi who rose to a ministerial post during his reign; he and Yang Yun denounced each other and were both demoted as a result.

daifu 大夫. Low-ranking Counsellor.

Daizong 岱宗. Sacred peak at Mount Tai.

dajie 大街. Thoroughfare. See also *jie*.

Dali 大理. Minister of Justice, title of legendary minister Gao Yao in time of Yao.

dang 當. To be charged with.

dang dang hu ba chuan fenliu 蕩蕩乎八川分流. Vast and mighty, eight rivers flow in separate courses.

dangyou 黨友. Friends (belonging to one’s) group or faction.

dani bu/wudao 大逆不/無道. Treasonous or impious activity, lèse-majesté.

Dao De 道德. The Way and Its Power.

Dao Gong 悼公. Lord Dao, of Jin, r. 572–558 BCE.

Dao Guan 導官. Director of Grain Selection. dark chamber. See *xuanshi*.

daoyin anqiao 導引按蹻. Pulling and massage exercises.

Dayou 大有. “Great Holdings,” hexagram 14.

De 德. Power, as in Wu De.

de 德. Power and authority.

Debates about Antiquity. See *Gushi Bian*.

Deciding Cases with the Annals. See *Chunqiu jueyu*.

deed of investiture. See *ceshu*.

Deng Jun 鄧君. Lord Deng(?), Eastern Han Regional Inspector whose tomb was found in Hunan.

Deng Zhongkuang 鄧仲況, fl. 27 CE. Junior commander under Yan Cen who later submitted to Guangwudi.

di 第. Mansion, with a gate that gave out directly onto a thoroughfare.

di 邸. Residence, residential complex in the capital assigned to a kingdom, a commandery, or a dependent state.

Di Ku 帝嚳. Title or name of legendary ruler of antiquity.

Di xi 帝系. Historical source cited by Liu Xin, now lost.

Di Zhi 地支. Earthly Branches, a series of twelve.

Dian Shuguo 典屬國. Director of Dependent States.

Diaoyutai 釣魚台. Fishing Terrace.

Dijie 地節. Reign period, 69–66 BCE.

“Dili zhi” 地理志. “Geographical Treatise,” chapter 18 of *Hanshu*.

Ding 丁. A consort family; the family’s daughter married into the royal family of Dingtao and gave birth to the future Aidi.

ding 鼎. Tripod.

Ding Gong 定公. Lord Ding of Jin, r. 511–475 BCE.

Ding Gong 丁恭, fl. 26–44 CE. *Gongyang* scholar and Academician who reached high office.

Dingbian 定邊. Place in Shaanxi where mural tombs from the Wang Mang era have been found.

Dingtao 定陶. Western Han kingdom.

Dingtao Taihou 定陶太后. See Fu Taihou.

Ding county. See Dingzhou.

dingyou 丁酉. Day 34 in the sexagenary cycle.

Dingzhou 定州. City in Hebei Province, formerly known as Ding county.

Director of Grain Selection. See Dao Guan.

Director of Prayers. See Taizhu.

Director of Provisions. See Taiguan.

Director of Stores. See Ku Ling.

- Director of the Palace Writers. See Zhongshu Ling.
- Diviner Yu 史魚. High official in Wei during the Chunqiu period.
- dizhu* 砥柱. Rocks and rapids.
- Documents*. See *Shangshu*; *Shu*.
- Dong Han 東漢. Eastern Han dynasty, 25–220 CE.
- Dong Jin 東晉. Eastern Jin dynasty, 317–420 CE.
- Dong Que 東闕. Eastern Towergate, of the Weiyang Palace.
- Dong Shi 東市. Eastern Market, largest of the two markets north of Chang'an city.
- dong zhi* 冬至. Winter solstice.
- Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, ca. 179–104 BCE. *Gongyang* scholar whose reputation grew considerably over the course of the first century BCE; the *Chunqiu fanlu* is attributed to him.
- Dong Zhou 東周. Eastern Zhou, 771–221 BCE, comprises the Chunqiu and Zhanguo periods.
- Dongfang Shuo 東方朔, 154–93 BCE. Expert entertainer and debater at Wudi's court.
- Dongguo Xiangsheng 東郭先生. Master Dongguo, fl. 120 BCE, recluse from Qi famous for advising Wei Qing to donate half of an award to the parents of Wudi's favorite consort.
- Donglai 東萊. A domain conquered by Qi in the late Chunqiu period; also a Western Han commandery on the eastern tip of the Shandong Peninsula.
- Dongmen Yun 東門雲. Disciple of Wang Zhong.
- Dongping 東平. Western Han kingdom.
- dongshi mu* 洞室墓. Catacomb tomb.
- Dou 竇. Name of unidentified general.
- Dou Yifang 竇漪房, d. 135 BCE. Empress of Wendi, mother of Jingdi.
- Dou Ying 竇嬰, d. 131 BCE. Member of Dou consort family and adviser of Jingdi, committed to classical learning.
- Dragon's Head. See Longshou Qu; Longshou Shan; Longshou Yuan.
- Du 杜. See Duling.
- Du county. See *Du xian*.
- Du Dong Yuan 都東原. Eastern Du Plain.
- Du Fu 杜甫, 712–770 CE. Tang poet, author of the poem "Suxi" 宿昔.
- Du Hou 秭侯. Noble of Du. See Jin Shang.
- Du Qin 杜欽, fl. 33–22 BCE. Member of prominent family in the capital and ally of Wang Feng.
- Du xian* 杜縣. Du county.
- Du Yannian 杜延年, d. 52 BCE. Imperial Counsellor from 55 BCE onward, youngest son of Du You.
- Du Ye 杜業, d. 2 CE. Member of prominent family in the capital and nephew of Du Qin.
- Du Yu 杜預, 222–284 CE. Western Jin statesman and general, commentator to the *Zuozhuan*.
- Du Zhou 杜周, d. 95 BCE. Official at Wudi's court who reached the position of Imperial Counsellor.
- Du zhu 杜主. Du Host, a general during Zhou who was divinized.
- Duan Yucai 段玉裁, 1735–1815 CE. Commentator to *Shuowen*.
- Duanyin Shan 短陰山. Duanyin Mountains.
- Dui 兌. "Joyous," hexagram 58.
- Dujiang Yan 都江堰. Dujiang Dike.
- Dukang 督亢. Region in Zhanguo period.
- Duling 杜陵. Duling mausoleum of Xuandi, southeast of Chang'an; Duling mausoleum town 杜陵邑.
- Dunhuang 燉煌. Commandery in the northwest.
- Duo Jiao 鐸椒, fl. 335 BCE. Tutor to King Wei of Chu.
- Duoshi wei* 鐸氏微. *Underlying Essentials of Mr. Duo*.
- Duwei 都尉. Commandant of a Han commandery.
- duyao* 毒藥. Medicaments.
- e hui* 厄會. Ominous events.
- Earthly Branches. See Di Zhi.
- Eastern Du Plain. See Du Dong Yuan.
- Eastern Han. See Dong Han.
- Eastern Jin. See Dong Jin.
- Eastern Market. See Dong Shi.
- Eastern Zhou. See Dong Zhou.
- Echeng 阿城. E city.
- Eight Divine Hosts. See Ba Zhu.
- Eight Palaces. See Ba Gong.
- Elegant Crown for the Annals*. See *Chunqiu fanlu*.

Empress. See Huanghou.
 Empress Dou. See Dou Yifang.
 Empress Dowager. See Huang Taihou.
 Empress Dowager Wang. See Wang Zhi; Wang Zhengjun.
 enclosed walkway/roadway. See *gedao*.
Encountering Sorrow. See *Lisao*.
 Epang Gong 阿房宮. Epang Palace, a Qin palace south of Wei River.
 “Er nian lü ling” 二年律令. “Statutes and Ordinances of the Second Year,” dated to 186 BCE, excavated from Zhangjiashan M247.
 Eternal Trust Palace. See Changxin Gong.
 Ever-Full Granary. See Changman Cang.
 Ever-Level Granary. See Changping Cang.
 Executive Council. See San Gong.
 “extending generosity.” See *tui'en*.
 Ezhu 鄂渚. Isle of E.

Fa Mo shou 發墨守. *Breaking through the Mohist Defense*.
Falü dawen 法律答問. *Questions on the Laws and Statutes*.
 Fan 范. A rival clan in Jin, fifth century BCE.
 Fan Bing 樊並, d. 14 BCE. Late Western Han rebel.
 Fan Jishe 范吉射, fifth century BCE. Son-in-law of Xun Yin.
 Fan Li 范蠡, ca. 520–460 BCE. A.k.a. Chiyi Zipi 鴟夷子皮 (Master of the Winebag Skins), acquired great wealth after he abandoned his post as Chief Minister to the King of Yue.
 Fan Ning 范寧, 339–401 CE. Author of the *Collected Explanations of the Guliang Tradition of the Annals*.
 Fan Sheng 范升, fl. 26–60 CE.
Fan Shengzhi shu 汜勝之書 (*Fan Shengzhi's Writings*), monograph on household management from Chengdi's reign.
 Fan Wuji 樊於期, d. ca. 227 BCE. General of Qin.
 Fan Xuanzi 范宣子, fl. 552 BCE. Jin minister who imprisoned Shuxiang.
 Fang 房. Chamber, fourth lunar mansion (corresponding to Ming Tang).
fang 方. Prescriptions.
fang 魴. Urn, urn with square-shaped mouth.

fangji 方技. Esoteric arts.
 Fangling 房陵. Place in Hanzhong Commandery.
fangshi 方士. Magus.
fei ji 非吉. Unlucky.
fei zheng jing 非正經. Not the standard classics.
 Feichang 非常室. *Wunderkammer*.
fen zhi 分職. Discrete responsibilities.
 Feng 豐. Western Zhou capital.
 Feng Fengshi 馮奉世, d. 39 BCE. Military man who served as General of the Left and Commissioner of the Palace.
 Feng He 豐河. Feng River.
 Feng Que 鳳闕. Phoenix Towergate.
 Feng Qun 馮參, fl. 38–32 BCE. Commandery official under Yuandi and Chengdi.
 Feng Shang 馮商, fl. 25 BCE. Wrote additions to *Shiji* on imperial orders.
feng shi 封事. Sealed memorial (lit., sealed matter), memorial that only the emperor was permitted to open and read.
 Feng Yewang 馮野王, fl. 47–24 BCE. Member of Feng consort clan and maternal uncle of Liu Xing 劉興, King of Zhongshan (r. 23–8 BCE); occupied various high positions at Yuandi's and Chengdi's court until he ran afoul of Wang Feng in 24 BCE.
fengjiao 風角. Divination by the winds.
 Fengju Duwei 奉車都尉. Commandant of Cavalry.
 Fengju Guanglu Dafu 奉車光祿大夫. Palace Counsellor of the Imperial Carriages.
fengshan 封禪. *Feng* and *shan* sacrifices, imperial rites to Heaven and Earth carried out at Mount Tai by Wudi in 110 BCE.
Fengsu tongyi 風俗通義. *Comprehensive Discussion of Customs*, by Ying Shao.
 Fenyin 汾陰. Site of altar to Houtu, 210 kilometers northeast of Chang'an (ancient travel distance, 266 km).
 First Emperor. See Qin Shihuang.
 first month. See *zheng yue*.
 Five Capitals. See Wu Du.
 Five Classics. *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, *Annals*, and *Changes* (later dubbed the five “Confucian” classics).
 Five Junctures. See Wu Ji.
 Five Lords. See Wu Di.
 Five Mausoleums. See Wuling.

- Five Phases. See Wuxing.
- Five Planets. See Wu Xing.
- Five Powers. See Wu Di.
- Five Powers cycle. See *Wu De zhongshi*.
- flexed burial. See *quzhizang*.
- fou* 缶. Small-mouthed container.
- frontier colonies. See *tun tian*.
- fu* 福. Blessings.
- Fu 富. Name of ward within Lude city.
- fu* 伏. Summer sacrifice.
- Fu 傅. Tutor, official responsible for the education of the king to whom he was assigned.
- fu* 賦. A type of poem, sometimes called a “rhapsody.”
- Fu Sheng 伏生. Master Fu, fl. 110–80 BCE, Qin Academician credited with transmitting the *Documents* to the Western Han imperial court.
- Fu Taihou 傅太后. Queen Dowager Fu, d. 2 BCE, Yuandi’s consort, Liu Kang’s mother, and Aidì’s grandmother.
- “Fu Xin Kuai liezhuan” 傅靳蒯列傳. “Biographies of Fu, Xin, and Kuai,” Zhang Yan’s designation for chapter 98 of *Shiji*.
- Fucheng 附城. Noble of the Interior, title for Guanneihou under Wang Mang.
- fudao* 復道. Elevated enclosed road.
- fugu* 復古. Restore antiquity.
- fuhua de quti* 浮華的軀體. Insubstantial body.
- fuli* 復立. Restoration, of a hereditary line.
- Fuming* 符命. *Tally Mandate*, document promulgated immediately after the foundation of the Xin dynasty in 9 CE.
- Fuxi 伏羲. Male half of mythological primordial couple, often depicted on pictorial bricks from the Han period.
- gai luan jiu zhang* 改亂舊章. “By his changes, he was throwing old sections of writings into confusion.”
- Gan Yanshou 甘延壽, d. 24 BCE. Served as Protector General of the Western Regions (Xiyu Duhu) when he allowed Chen Tang, in 36 BCE, to move against Zhizhi Chanyu.
- Gan Zhongke 甘忠可. Calendrical expert who ran afoul of the court by predicting the end of Western Han during Chengdi’s reign in two texts, *Tian guan li* and *Bao yuan tai ping jing*.
- Ganquan 甘泉. Sweet Springs, site of altar to Taiyi, 80 kilometers northwest of Chang’an (ancient travel distance, 82 km).
- Gao Xin 高辛. Descendant of the Yellow Emperor.
- Gao Yao 皋陶. Minister of Justice under Yao, also Minister under Shun.
- Gaodu Li 高都里. Gaodu Ward, in Chang’an city.
- Gaomi 高密. Western Han kingdom.
- Gaomiao 高廟. Temple to Gaozu.
- Gaoyang Yuan 高楊原. Gaoyang Plain.
- Gaozu 高祖. High Ancestor, first Western Han emperor, r. 206–202 BCE as King of Han, r. 202–195 BCE as emperor; personal name Liu Bang 劉邦. For Gaozu’s Changling, see Changling 長陵.
- garlic-headed urn. See *hu* 壺.
- Ge Kuanrao 蓋寬饒, d. 60 BCE. Scholar and court official, condemned for criticizing his peers and insinuating that Xuandi should abdicate.
- ge ming* 革命. Transfer of the Mandate.
- ge zheng* 革政. Transfer in governance.
- gedao* 閣道. Enclosed walkway and roadway.
- General-in-Chief. See Da Jiangjun.
- General of the Right. See You Jiangjun.
- geng* 更 once again, in his turn.
- Geng Shi 更始. Restoration.
- Geng Shouchang 耿壽昌, fl. 57–52 BCE. Minor official best known for proposals to improve economic welfare, which were opposed by Xiao Wangzhi.
- Gengsheng 更生. Given name of Liu Xiang (he changed it to Xiang in 33 BCE).
- goblet. See *zun* 樽.
- gong* 貢. Tribute.
- “Gong chen biao” 功臣表. “Table of Meritorious Subjects”; two tables, one in *Hanshu* 16 dealing with the early reigns (Gaozu to Wendi), one in *Hanshu* 17 dealing with reigns of Jingdi to Chengdi.
- Gong Gong 共工. Legendary ruler of antiquity.
- gong qing* 公卿. Ministers.
- gong tian* 公田. Public fields.
- Gong Yu 貢禹, d. 44 BCE. Scholar and statesman, proposed abolition of some shrines during Yuandi’s reign as well as economic reforms.

gongdian jue ding zhuyi 宮殿決定主義. Palace determinism, a phrase coined by Tang Xiaofeng.

Gongqing 公卿. Excellencies and Ministers, Ministers.

Gongshi 工師. Artisan Master, title of Chui in time of Yao.

Gongshi 公士. Title of the lowest of the twenty orders of honor.

Gongsun Bingyi 公孫病已. Named in Sui Meng's omen interpretation of 78 BCE as the next emperor.

Gongsun Guang 公孫光. Teacher of Chunyu Yi.

Gongsun Hong 公孫弘, d. 121 BCE. *Gongyang* specialist and Chancellor under Wudi.

Gongsun Wen 公孫文. Disciple of Wang Zhong.

Gongyang 公羊. Commentarial tradition to the *Annals*, considered older than the *Guliang*.

Gongyang Dong Zhongshu zhiyu 公羊董仲舒治獄. Text now only known only from fragments.

Gongyang Gao 公羊高, fl. Zhanguo period. Student of Confucius's disciple Zi Xia and regarded as author of the *Gongyang*.

Gongyang Mo shou 公羊墨守. *Mohist Defense of the Gongyang Tradition*, ascribed to He Xiu.

Gongyang Shou 公羊壽, fl. 150 BCE. *Annals* scholar.

Gongyang Yanshi ji 公羊顏氏記. *Mr. Yan's Records on the Gongyang*.

Gongyang zaji 公羊雜記. *Miscellaneous Records on the Gongyang*.

Gou Li 苟里. Gou Ward, in Chang'an city.

Goujian Wang 勾踐王. King Goujian of Yue, r. 496–465 BCE; after defeating Wu 吳, King Goujian's state became one of the the most powerful during the late Chunqiu period.

Gouxu zhi 溝洫志. "Treatise on Waterways," chapter 29 of *Hanshu*.

Gouyi Furen 鉤弋夫人. Lady of the Hook and Dart Palace. See Zhao Jieyu.

Gouzen 鉤陳. Angular Array, group of six stars.

Gouzu 句注. Mountains in Shaanxi.

Governor. See Taishou.

Governor of the Capital. See Jingzhao Yin.

Grand Altars. See Tai Zhi.

Grand Counsellor of the Palace. See Taizhong Dafu.

Grand Empress Dowager. See Taihuang Taihou.

Grand Inception. See Taichu.

Grand Music Master. See Da Shi.

Great Beginning. See Taichu.

Great Granary. See Tai Cang.

gu 固. Indeed.

"Gu feng" 谷風. "Valley Wind," no. 35 of the *Odes*.

Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛, 1893–1980 CE. Chinese historian and author of *Gushi bian*.

gu ling 故陵. Old tomb.

gu shengren za he yi zhi, ge de qi suo yi 故聖人雜合以治各得其所宜. The sage combines what is sundry in treating, obtaining what is fitting for each case.

Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, 1613–1682 CE. Famous scholar.

Gu Yong 谷永, d. 9 BCE. Statesman and calendrical and omen expert during Chengdi's reign.

Gua qi 卦氣. Hexagram-qi.

Gua Xu 卦序. Hexagram sequence theory (not to be confused with the Xu Gua 序卦 section in the *Yijing*).

Guan 觀. "Contemplation," hexagram 20.

guan 棺. Inner wooden coffin, wooden coffin.

guan 罐. Jar.

guan 關. Pass.

Guan Gong 貫公. Lord Guan, fl. 155–129 BCE, Academician at the court of Liu De who studied the *Zuozhuan* with Jia Yi.

guan guo 棺槨. Nested inner and outer wooden coffins.

Guan Lu 筭路. Student of Shu Guang and Yan Anle.

Guan Ying 灌嬰, d. 176 BCE. Comrade-in-arms of Gaozu who played a major part in removing the Lü family from power in 180 BCE; Chancellor under Wendi.

Guandong 關東. "Area east of the passes."

Guangde 廣德. Western Han kingdom.

Guangling 廣陵. Western Han kingdom.

Guanglu Dafu 光祿大夫. Counsellor of the Palace, title of an office in the Han central government.

Guangluxun 光祿勳. Commissioner of the Palace, one of the Nine Ministers.

- Guangwudi 光武帝. Emperor Guangwu, founder of Eastern Han, r. 25–57 CE; personal name Liu Xiu 劉秀.
- Guangyang 廣陽. Western Han Kingdom.
- Guanneihou 關內侯. Noble of the Interior, rank 19 of the 20 orders (20 being the top rank).
- Guanzhong 關中. “Area within the passes.” guardians’ tombs. See *shouling*.
- gui 圭. Ritual jade.
- Gui Gong 桂宮. “Cassia Palace,” in Chang’an city.
- “Guice liezhuan” 龜策列傳. “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,” chapter 128 of *Shiji*.
- Guiyang 桂陽. Commandery, part of Jingzhou.
- “Guji liezhuan” 滑稽列傳. “Biographies of Sarcastic Jesters,” chapter 126 of *Shiji*.
- “Gujin ren biao” 古今人表. “Table on Figures, Ancient and Modern,” chapter 20 of *Hanshu*, often ascribed to Ban Zhao.
- Gulian 穀梁. Commentarial tradition to the *Annals*, officially endorsed since 51 BCE.
- Gulian Chi 穀梁赤, fl. Zhanguo period. Student of Confucius’s disciple Zi Xia and considered author of the *Gulian*.
- Gulian zhuan 穀梁傳. *Gulian Traditions*.
- guo 國. Kingdom.
- guo 槨. Outer wooden coffin, wooden coffin chamber.
- “Guo Qin lun” 過秦論. “On Faulting Qin,” essay by Jia Yi.
- Guo Shi 國師. Nation’s Tutor, position held by Liu Xin.
- Guoyu 國語. *Discourses of the States*, third century BCE(?).
- gushi 故事. Precedent.
- Gushi bian 古史辨. *Debates about Antiquity*, first published 1926–41 CE; pathbreaking series in which Gu Jiegang and his collaborators challenged much of the received wisdom about the distant past.
- Guwen 古文. Archaic Script, which usually means pre-Qin seal script.
- Guwen yuan 古文苑. *Collection of Old Writings*, Song anthology that contains the earliest version of Liu Xin’s *Sui chu fu*.
- Hai 亥. Twelfth (and last) Earthly Branch.
- Han 漢. Milky Way, abbreviation for Tian Han 天漢.
- Han 韓. A rival clan in Jin, in the fifth century BCE; one of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 230 BCE.
- Han Discussions of the Annals*. See *Chunqiu Han yi*; He Xiu.
- Han Feizi 韓非子, ca. 280–233 BCE. Author of *Han Feizi* 韓非子.
- Han jiuyi* 漢舊儀. *Han Ceremonial Precedents*, by Wei Hong.
- Han Li 韓利, fl. 29 CE. Official in Eastern Han.
- Han Quchen 韓去疾. Han the Fever-Sore Remover.
- han xiao 含消. Filled with juice.
- Han Xin 韓歆, d. 39 CE.
- “Han xing yilai jiangxiang nianbiao” 漢興以來將相年表. “Table of Generals and Chancellors from the Han Founding,” chapter 22 of *Shiji*.
- Han Yan 韓嫣. Favorite of Wudi who informed the emperor about a half sister from his mother’s previous marriage.
- Han Yanshou 韓延壽, d. 56 BCE. A successful provincial Governor, ally of Yang Yun; publicly executed after accusations brought against him by Xiao Wangzhi, ally of Yang Yun.
- Han Yuanji 韓元吉, 1118–1187 CE. First editor and printer of *Guwen yuan*, based in Wuzhou.
- Handan 邯鄲. Capital of pre-unification Zhao, one of the Six Kingdoms, and one of the Five Capitals, in present-day Hebei.
- hangtu 夯土. Rammed earth.
- Hangu Guan 函谷關. Hangu Pass.
- Han Shi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳. *Han’s Outer Transmission of the Odes*.
- Hanshu* 漢書. *History of the Han*, compiled mainly by members of the Ban family, principally Ban Gu and Ban Zhao, and covering the period 202 BCE–23 CE.
- Hanshu jizhu* 漢書集注. *History of the Han, with Collected Commentaries*.
- Hanshu yinyi* 漢書音義. *History of the Han, Pronunciations and Meanings*.
- Hanzhong Jun 漢中郡. Hanzhong Commandery, south of the Qinling Mountains.
- Hao 鎬. One of the Western Zhou capitals.
- Hao He 滎/鎬河. Hao River.
- hao gu 好古. Antiquity-loving.

haoshizhe 好事者. Those who liked (to gossip about court) affairs.

he 盒. Box.

he 核. Seed.

he tian di zhong shu 合天地終數. The final figure uniting Heaven and Earth.

He Wu 何武, d. 3 CE. Statesman and institutional reformer behind the 8 BCE reforms.

He Xiu 何休, 129–182 CE. Scholar especially known for his work on the *Gongyang*; author of *Commentary to the Gongyang Tradition of the Annals*, *Han Discussions of the Annals*, and *Mohist Defense of the Gongyang Tradition*.

he zang 合葬. Joint burial, including adjacent and conjoint burials.

Heaven. See Tian; *tian*.

Heavenly Officers' Calendar. See *Tianguanli*.

Heaven's Mandate or Decree. See Tian Ming.

Hedi 和帝. Emperor He, Eastern Han emperor, r. 88–105 CE; personal name Liu Zhao 劉肇.

Hedong Jun 河東郡. Hedong Commandery, in Western Han. See also Henei Jun.

Hejian 河間. Western Han kingdom.

Henei Jun 河內郡. Henei Commandery; together with Henan 河南 and Hedong, part of the Three Rivers, commanderies whose importance was second only to that of the metropolitan region.

Heng Men 橫門. Heng City Gate, northwestern gate leading over a bridge to the imperial mausoleums. Compare Heng Men Dajie 橫門大街 (Heng Gate Thoroughfare).

Hengshan 衡山. Mount Heng.

hengshu de tudong mu 橫豎的土洞墓. Horizontal tomb.

Heping 和平. Reign period, 28–25 BCE.

heqin 和親. Marriage alliance, policy whereby the Han court sought to appease the Xiongnu or other groups through marrying Han princesses into the families of Xiongnu or other groups.

Hetu lu yun fa 河圖錄運法. *Cyclical Patterns Recorded in the Yellow River Chart*.

Hexi 河西. Western Han commandery(?).

Hexin Han Wenhua 核心漢文化. Core Han Culture, term coined by Yu Weichao.

History of the Han. See *Hanshu*.

Hong Gong 弘恭, d. ca. 46 BCE. A powerful

eunuch who was Director of the Palace Writers under Xuandi and Yuandi and ally of Shi Xian.

“Hong yan” 鴻雁. “Wild Geese,” no. 182 of the *Odes*, correlated with Shen in the Four Beginnings theory.

Hongfan wuxing zhuan lun 洪範五行傳論. *On the Great Plan's Wuxing Traditions*, by Liu Xiang.

Honggou Qu 鴻溝渠. Honggou Canal, connects Yellow and Huai 淮 Rivers.

Honggu Yuan 鴻固原. Honggu Plain, site of Xuandi's mausoleum.

Hongxiu Hou 紅休侯. Noble title and domain conferred on Liu Xin.

horizontal tomb. See *hengshu de tudong mu*.

hou 侯. Nobles.

Hou Cang 后倉, fl. 72 BCE. Academician whose teachings on ritual were especially influential and a source of motivation for religious reformers of late Western Han.

hou gong 後宮. Back palaces, areas in palaces where female members of the imperial house resided.

Hou Hanshu 後漢書. *History of the Later Han*, a history of the Eastern Han, mainly by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–446 CE), with contributions by others.

Hou Jiangjun 後將軍. Rear General, General of the Rear.

Houguo 侯國. Noble's Domain, lands given to a noble by the ruler so that he might derive income from them.

Houji 后稷. Lord Millet; first ancestor of the Zhou house, Director of Agricultural Fields under the legendary sage-king Yao.

Houjia/Hujia 侯/胡甲. River mentioned in Liu Xin's *fu*, also a mountain range.

houren 後人. Heirs, also “later men.”

Household Assistant. See Jiacheng.

Houtian 侯田. Post and relay station in Henei Commandery.

Houtu 后土. Sovereign Earth.

Hsü Fu-kuan 徐復觀, 1904–1982 CE. Modern historian and Confucian thinker.

hu 壺. Garlic-headed urn.

hu 戶. Household.

Hu 鄠. Site mentioned in *Hanshu* as lying west of Du county on the Eastern Du Plain.

- Hua Cang 華倉. Hua Granary.
Hua Shan 華山. Mount Hua.

Hua Tuo 華佗, d. ca. 208 CE. Legendary healer.
Huagai 華蓋. Flowery Canopy, nine-star constellation corresponding to stars in Cassiopeia.
Huai Wang 懷王. King Huai of Chu, r. 328–299 BCE.
Huainan 淮南. Western Han kingdom closed in 122 BCE.
Huaiyang 淮陽. Western Han kingdom.
huaji 滑稽. Sarcastic jesters; *guji* is the preferred pronunciation. See “Guji liezhuan.”
Huan Gong 桓公. “Sir Huan,” n.d., pupil of Xu Yan 徐延 of Lu and a ritual specialist, a.k.a. Huan Sheng 桓生 (Master Huan).
Huan Qiu 圜丘. Circular Hill.
Huan Tan 桓譚, ca. 43 BCE–28 CE. Adviser and scholar with an interest in *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*, author of *Xin lun* 新論 (*New Discourses*).
Huang Ba 黃霸, d. 51 BCE. Commandery Governor of reputed who also served as Imperial Counsellor and Chancellor.
Huang He 黃河. Yellow River.
huang jing 黃精. Essence of yellow.
Huang Taihou 皇太后. Empress Dowager.
huangchang ticou 黃腸體湊. Tomb constructed with large, horizontally stacked wooden beams.
Huangdi 黃帝. Yellow Emperor, a mythological emperor in primeval times.
Huangdi neijing 黃帝內經. *Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic*, compiled first century CE(?).
Huangdi zhongshi zhuan 黃帝終始傳. *The Yellow Emperor's Cycles*.
Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐, 215–282 CE. Medical author.
Huanghou 皇后. Empress.
Huangji Li 黃棘里. Huangji Ward, in Chang'an city.
Huangmen Lang 黃門郎. Courtier of the Yellow Gates.
Huangzhong 黃鐘. Yellow Bell, one of twelve pitch pipes, considered the foundation of the rest.
Huayin 華陰. Western Han county under the jurisdiction of the Jingzhao Yin, about 125 kilometers to the west of Chang'an.
- hucheng he 護城河 moat, around a walled settlement or city.
Huhanye 呼韓邪. Leader (Chanyu) of the Xiongnu, r. 58–31 BCE, and ally of Han who visited Chang'an twice, in 51 and 49 BCE.
hui tian 回塹. Cover over an excavated or partially excavated archaeological site.
Huidi 惠帝. Emperor Hui of Western Han, r. 195–188 BCE; personal name Liu Ying 劉盈.
Huiwen Wang 惠文王. King Huiwen of Qin, r. 337/324–311 BCE.
Huizhong Gong 回中宮. “Returning to the Center Palace,” a Qin palace on the road from Yong to Xianyang, in use in Western Han (destroyed 167 BCE, rebuilt 107 BCE).
Hundred Clans. See Bai Xing.
Huo Guang 霍光, d. 68 BCE. Member of the Wei consort family that was firmly in control of the government after Wudi's death.
Huo Qubing 霍去病, d. 117 BCE. Member of the Wei consort family and general during Wudi's reign, buried near Wudi's tomb at Maoling.
Hunye 混邪. King of the Xiongnu, fl. 121 BCE.
Huwu Sheng 胡毋生 Master Huwu.
- Im Che 林悌, 1549–1587 CE. Author of *Susǒng chi*.
Imperial Counsellor. See Da Sikong (after 8 BCE); Yushi Dafu.
Imperial Offices in Charge of Equalizing. See Jun Guan.
imperial tomb. See *ling mu*.
inner/outer. See *neiwai*.
inner wooden coffin. See *guan*.
Isle of E. See Ezhu.
- jar. See *guan* 罐.
ji 紀. Epoch.
ji 饑. Famine.
Ji 機. Pole, the Polestar. See also Beiji Xing.
ji 記. Records.
ji 季. Third, of a period or of sons.
ji 計. Yearly accounts.
Ji An 汲黯, d. after 118 BCE. Official at Wudi's court famous for his frank remonstrations.
Ji Bu 季布, fl. 202–180 BCE. Pardoned by Gaozu for having fought with enemies of the Han and rewarded with various appointments in

- early Western Han; his reputation for talent grew posthumously.
- “Ji dian” 祭典. “Norms for Sacrifice,” chapter invoked in Liu Xin’s *Passage of the Generations*.
- Ji Duwei 騎都尉. Commandant of the Cavalry.
- Ji Heng 機衡. Transverse and Armil, fifth and third stars of the Northern Dipper.
- ji hui* 際會. Conjunctions.
- ji hui zhi e* 際會之厄. Ominous events at the junctions.
- Ji Miao 極廟. Pole Temple, a Qin palace/temple. See Xin Gong.
- ji shi* 季世. Waning days, period of decay at the end of a cycle.
- Ji Suan Fa 積算法. Accumulated Calculations Method, theory of Jing Fang that tied hexagrams to the Ten Heavenly Stems and the Twelve Earthly Branches.
- jia* 甲. Character whose shape suggests a tomb.
- Jia* 夾. Commentarial tradition to the *Annals* about which little is known.
- Jia* 嘉. Descendant of the royal house of Zhou.
- Jia* (or *Jiahe*) Cang 嘉/嘉禾倉. Auspicious Grain Granary.
- Jia Kui* 賈逵, 30–101 CE. Advocate of the Archaic Script texts, promotor of the *Zuozhuan*.
- Jia Xin Gong* 嘉新公. Lord Who Celebrates the Xin Dynasty, noble title held by Liu Xin.
- Jia Yi* 賈誼, 200–168 BCE. Adviser to Wendi and author of *Xinshu* 新書 and of poems and memorials.
- jiachen* 甲辰. Day 41 in the sexagenary cycle.
- jiacheng* 家丞. Household Assistant.
- jiaji* 家技. Individual lineages or households.
- jian* 兼. Completely.
- jian* 建. Proposal.
- jian* 見. See.
- Jian Dafu* 諫大夫. Advisory Counsellor.
- jianbing* 兼并. Landholdings in noncontiguous sites.
- Jiang Yingju* 蔣英炬, b. 1938. Archaeologist who proposed that the inside walls of tombs built for the highest-ranking occupants were lined with silk hangings.
- Jiangzuo Da Jiang* 將作大匠. Court Architect.
- Jianhou* 建侯. Theory of Jing Fang, in which one Jianhou cycle equals thirty-two years and is governed by the Line Texts of the hexagrams.
- Jianshi* 建始. Reign period, 33–29 BCE.
- Jiayang Li* 建陽里. Jiayang Ward, in Chang’an city.
- Jianyuan* 建元. Reign period, 140–135 BCE.
- “*Jianyuan yilai houzhe nianbiao*” 建元以來侯者年表. “Table of the Marquises Ennobled since the Jianyuan Period (140–135 BCE),” chapter 20 of *Shiji*.
- Jianzhang Gong* 建章宮. Jianzhang Palace, built during Wudi’s reign just west of the Chang’an city walls.
- jiao* 校. Collation.
- Jiao* 交. “Connecting” River or Canal.
- Jiaodong* 膠東. Western Han kingdom.
- jiaohua* 教化. Civilizing processes.
- “*Jiaosi zhi*” 郊祀志, “Treatise on the Suburban Sacrifices,” chapter 25 of *Hanshu*.
- Jiaotong daxue* 交通大學, Jiao Tong University, in southeast of modern Xi’an; a mural tomb was excavated on its campus in 1987.
- jiashen* 甲申. Day 21 in the sexagenary cycle.
- jiazi* 甲子. Day 1 in the sexagenary cycle.
- Jibin* 罽賓. Alexander’s Bactria(?), Kashmir(?), Gandhara(?).
- Jie* 桀. A legendary tyrant, the last ruler of the Xia dynasty.
- jie* 街. Road or thoroughfare. See also *dajie*.
- Jiejie* 解疥. Scabies Xie.
- Jieshi* 碣石. Place on the coast of the Bohai Sea, in present-day Liaoning.
- Jieshui* Poshui 揭水波水. Raise-Water Slope.
- Jieyu* 婕妤. Title for a consort of senior status, established by Wudi.
- jihai* 己亥. Day 36 in the sexagenary cycle.
- Jihui shuo* 際會說. Conjunction theory.
- Jimen* 棘門. Place north of the Wei River.
- jimi* 羈縻. “Be led like a horse or an ox by a halter,” policy toward the Xiongnu developed by Xiao Wangzhi that included neither conquest nor acculturation.
- Jiyuan* 紀元. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
- Jin* 晉. “Progress,” hexagram 35.
- jin* 進. To advance.
- jin* 斤. Unit of measure, about 248 grams in Western Han.
- Jin Anshang* 金安上, d. 55 BCE. Leader of the

- Palace Guards and, perhaps, Yang Yun's superior; like Yang Yun he was awarded a noble title and domain for his role in revealing the Huo family's plot, and years later he was sent to question Xiao Wangzhi.
- Jin Di 金隄. Golden Dike.
- Jin Shang 金賞, d. 42 BCE. Succeeded his father Jin Midi 金日磾 as Noble of Du.
- Jin Wangsun 金王孫. Husband of Wang Zhi, before she became Jingdi's consort.
- Jin Zhuo 晉灼, third century CE. Author of *Hanshu yinyi*.
- Jin Zhao Yang ru yu Jinyang yi pan 晉趙鞅入于晉陽以叛. Zhao Yang of Jin entered Jinyang in order to rebel.
- Jing 景. Family of Chu that was relocated to Chang'an in early Western Han.
- Jing fa 經法. *Canon and Law*, text inscribed on silk found at Mawangdui.
- Jing Fang 京房, 77–37 BCE. The younger of two *Changes* experts by this name.
- Jing Gong 靖公. Lord Jing of Jin, r. 377–376 BCE; Jin's last ruler.
- "Jing [di ben] ji" 景紀. "Basic Annals of Emperor Jing," chapter 11 of *Shiji*.
- jing guo 井槨. Wooden outer coffin with compartments.
- Jing He 涇河. Jing River.
- Jing Ke 荊軻, d. 227 BCE. Failed assassin of First Emperor.
- jing zhuan 經傳. The classic and its commentarial tradition(s).
- Jingbian 境邊. Place in Shaanxi where mural tombs from the Wang Mang era have been found.
- Jingdi 景帝. Emperor Jing of Western Han, r. 157–141 BCE; personal name Liu Qi 劉啟.
- Jingshang Li 敬上里. Jingshang Ward, in Chang'an city.
- Jingshi Cang 京師倉. Capital Granary.
- Jingshi jienü 京師節女. "Woman of Principle from the Capital," section in *Lienü zhuan*.
- jingshu 經術. The arts associated with the Five Classics.
- Jingzhao Yin 京兆尹. Governor of the Capital.
- jingzhi 經旨. Larger import of the classics.
- Jingzhou 荊州. Province that comprised seven commanderies during Eastern Han, in present-day Hunan; a.k.a. Jingbu 荊部.
- jinnian bigua busui . . . de zai zhonggong 今年比卦部歲 . . . 德在中宮. Hexagram 8, "Unity" (Bi 比), controls this year . . . with its power residing in the central palace.
- Jinshu 晉書. *History of the Jin*, by Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578–648 CE).
- Jinyang 晉陽. Place name mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*, southwest of present-day Taiyuan.
- Jiu Huang 九皇. Nine Sovereigns.
- Jiu Miao 九廟. Nine Temples.
- Jiu Qing 九卿. Nine Ministers.
- Jiu Shi 九市. Nine Markets or Districts.
- Jiu Tangshu 舊唐書. *Old Tang History*, 940–945 CE.
- jiu wang shi yu Tuwu 救王師於途吾. And rescued the king's army on the road.
- jiu wangshu yu Xuwu 救王師於余吾. (Jin) rescued the royal troops at Xuwu.
- "Jiu zhang" 九章. "Nine Declarations," part of *Chuci*.
- jiubing 灸炳. Moxa.
- Jiujiang Jun 九江郡. Jiujiang Commandery, in Western Han, in the south.
- Jiujuan 九卷. *Nine Chapters*.
- Jiuquan Jun 酒泉郡. Jiuquan Commandery, in the northwest.
- Jiuyuan 九原. Western Han county, in Wuyuan Commandery.
- jiyi 疾醫. A healer of illnesses.
- Jizu wei Wu wang chen wuxing yin yang xiu jiu zhi ying 箕子為武王陳五行陰陽休咎之應. *Master Ji's Exposition to King Wu Regarding the Beneficial or Detrimental Effects of the Five Phases and Yin-Yang*, by Liu Xiang.
- joint burial. See *he zang*.
- ju she 居攝. Take sole power.
- juan 卷. Scroll, chapter.
- Juan Xun 涓勳, fl. 20–15 BCE. Colonel of Internal Security who came in conflict with Zhai Fangjin.
- jue 厥. His.
- jue 爵. Orders of honor, Western Han system of twenty orders awarded to subjects, with attached privileges.
- Jue/Xue He 潏/洧河. Jue/Xue River.
- Juji Jiangjun 車騎將軍. General of Chariots and Cavalry.
- jun 郡. Commandery.
- "Jun dao" 君道. "Way of the Ruler," chapter in Liu Xiang's *Shuiyuan*.

Jun Guan 均官. Imperial Offices in Charge of Equalizing (Prices and Supplies).

jun qi yi zhou 君期一周. The ruling house has passed through one cycle of 360 years.

junzi 君子. Gentleman.

juwen 屬文. Composing passages from disparate units of texts.

Juyan 居延. County within Zhangye Commandery; site in Gansu where many Han administrative documents have been excavated.

Kangju 康居. Kangju, Central Asian kingdom tentatively identified as Sogdia.

kao gong xiao 考功效. Evaluate (job) effectiveness.

Kaode 考德. Source cited by Liu Xin.

“Kaogong ji” 考工記. “Record of Artisans,” chapter eventually included in *Zhouli*.

keqing 客卿. Guest minister, originally an office in pre-unification Qin held by advisers from other kingdoms.

King Cheng. See Cheng Wang.

King of Lu styled the “Venerable.” See Liu Yu 劉餘.

Kong Anguo 孔安國, fl. 128 BCE. Descendant of Confucius who purportedly obtained an Archaic Script version of the *Documents* when Confucius’s residence was demolished by Liu Yu 劉餘.

Kong Guang 孔光, d. 5 CE. Descendant of Confucius and prominent statesman during Chengdi’s reign and later.

Kong Yingda 孔穎達 574–648 CE. Tang classicist.

Kongzi 孔子. Confucius, 551–479 BCE.

Ku Ling 庫令. Director of Stores.

Kuaiji Jun 會稽郡. Kuaiji Commandery, in Western Han.

Kuang Heng 匡衡, d. 30 or 29 BCE. Chancellor and one of the main forces behind the late Western Han ritual and religious reforms.

Kui 夔. Music Master under Yao.

Kun 困. “Exhaustion,” hexagram 47.

Kunming Chi 昆明池. Kunming Pond.

Kunming Qu 昆明渠. Kunming Canals or Lines; Gu Qu 昆明古渠 (Kunming “Old Canal”).

la 臘. New Year’s festival.

ladle. See *shao* 勺.

Lady Ban. See Ban Jieyu.

Lady Wang. See Wang Furen.

Lady Zhao. See Zhao Jieyu.

Lan Tai 蘭臺. Orchid Pavilion, one area in the palaces where official documents were kept.

Lang 郎. Courtier, Palace Guard (per Kroll); these officials performed multiple tasks at court, with some serving as palace guards, clerks, or policy advisers.

Lang Yi 郎顗, fl. 133 CE. Classical scholar with specialty in the *Changes* and esoteric arts.

Langye Jun 琅瑯郡. Langye Commandery, in Western Han, on the eastern seaboard and part of the Shandong Peninsula.

Langzhong Ling 郎中令. Commissioner of the Palace.

Lantian 藍田. Western Han county under the jurisdiction of the Jingzhao Yin, known for its beautiful jades (*mei yu* 美玉).

Lao He 滌河. Lao River.

laoyang 老陽. Old yang, in the *Changes*.

laoyin 老陰. Old yin, in the *Changes*.

Laozi 老子. Master Lao.

Leader of the Courtiers of the Palace. See Zhonglang Jiang.

Left General. See Zuo Jiangjun.

Leigong 雷公. Lord Thunder, divinity that controlled thunder.

lèse-majesté. See *bu jing*.

Li 李. Name of a consort family hostile to Xiao Wangzhi and Zhou Kan.

Li 禮. Rites classic or classics.

li 禮. Ritual.

li 里. Unit of length (0.415 km); also (residential) ward, area covered by a residential ward; apparently also a unit for an urban district.

Li Bo 李白, 701–762 CE. Tang poet and author of “Yuexia duzhuo.”

Li Cheng 利成. Household Assistant in Western Han whose tomb was excavated at Xin’an Brick Factory.

Li Chong 李崇, fl. 16 CE. Protector General of the Western Regions under Wang Mang.

Li Daoyuan 酈道元, ca. 470–527 CE. Author of *Shuijing zhu*.

- li fa* 歷法. Calendrical methods.
- Li Feng 李封, fl. 28 CE.
- li gong* 離宮. Traveling palace. See also *xing gong*.
- Li Guangli 李廣利, d. ca. 90 BCE. Member of the Li consort family during Wudi's reign and a successful general.
- Li Li 李里. Li Ward, in Chang'an city, according to some scholars identical to Xiao Li.
- Li Ling 李零, b. 1948. Modern scholar of early China.
- Li Ping 李平, or Li Jieyu 李婕妤, a.k.a. Wei Jieyu 衛婕妤, fl. 20 BCE. Favorite consort of Chengdi who backed Wang Shang's unsuccessful attempt to have his daughter introduced into Chengdi's back palace.
- "Li Sheng Lu Jia liezhuan" 酈生陸賈列傳. "Biographies of Masters Li and Lu Jia," chapter 97 of *Shiji*.
- li shu* 歷數. Calendrical computation numbers.
- "Li shu" 禮書. "Treatise on the Rites," chapter 23 of *Shiji*.
- Li Si 李斯, 280?–208 BCE. Chancellor of Qin during the First Emperor's reign.
- Li Wang 厲王. King Li of Western Zhou, r. 857/53–842/28.
- Li Xi 李息, fl. 133–115, BCE. official at Wudi's court with whom Ji An shared his opinions of Zhang Tang.
- Li Xun 李尋, fl. 15–5 BCE. Student of the *Documents*, especially the "Hongfan" 洪範 chapter; he was called upon to explain astrological phenomena.
- Li Yi 李姬. Concubine Li, minor consort of Wudi and mother of Liu Dan and Liu Xu.
- Li Yiji 酈食其, d. ca. 204 BCE. Accomplice of Gaozu.
- Li Yu 李育, fl. 76 CE. *Gongyang* scholar and Academician, author of *Objections to the Zuo Commentary*.
- Li Yun 李雲, d. 159 CE. Submitted rash anti-eunuch memorial.
- li yun* 歷運. Calendrical cycles.
- "Li Zheng" 立政. "Establishing Good Rule," chapter in *Guanzi*.
- Li Zhuguo 李柱國, fl. 26 BCE. Worked under Liu Xiang on the imperial catalogue, with responsibility for medical texts; was Physician in Attendance.
- Liang 梁. Western Han kingdom.
- liang shi* 良史. Good scribe.
- "Liang Xiao wang shijia" 梁孝王世家. "Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang," chapter 58 of *Shiji*.
- Liangqiu He 梁丘賀, d. before 48 BCE. *Changes* scholar who reached ministerial rank.
- Liangshan Gong 梁山宮. Mount Liang Palace.
- Liangsidu 兩寺渡. Place near modern-day Xianyang in Shaanxi.
- Liangzhou 涼州. Province west of Chang'an.
- Lidai fuhui* 歷代賦彙. *Collection of Fu from throughout the Ages*, a Qing anthology.
- lidian* 里典. Ward directors, as in the Qin legal strips from Shuihudi.
- Lienü zhuan* 列女傳. *Biographies of Exemplary Women*, text by Liu Xiang with female moral exempla.
- Lienü zhuan song tu* 列女傳頌圖. *Biographies of Exemplary Women with Praise-Songs and Illustrations*.
- liezhuan* 列傳. Biographies.
- Liezi* 列子 *Master Lie*.
- Ligong Daxue 理工大學. University of Technology, in southeast of modern Xi'an; a mural tomb was excavated on its campus in 2004.
- Liji* 禮記. *Rites Record*, one of the three ritual classics.
- lin chao cheng zhi* 臨朝稱制. Issue edicts in an emperor's name.
- Line Texts. See Yao 爻.
- Ling 令. Magistrate.
- ling* 陵. Mausoleum; but the term also carries other meanings (such as "hill").
- Ling Feng 冷豐. *Gongyang* scholar and student of Yan Anle.
- Ling Guan 零關. Ling Pass.
- ling mu* 陵墓. Imperial tomb.
- Lingchi Qu 靈軹渠. Lingchi Canal.
- Lingdi 靈帝. Emperor Ling, Eastern Han emperor, r. 168–189 CE; personal name Liu Hong 劉宏.
- Lingnan 嶺南. Area south of the Five Peaks (Wu Ling 五嶺), comprising present-day Guangdong and Guangxi.
- Lingtai 靈臺. Luminous Terrace.
- Linwo 臨沃. County seat in Wuyuan Commandery.

- Linzi 臨淄. Capital of Qi, present-day Shandong.
- Lisao 離騷. *Encountering Sorrow*, first poem (a *fu*) in *Chuci*.
- Lishan 鄒山. Site of First Emperor's mausoleum.
- Lishu jiazi bian 歷術甲子編. *The Jiazi Calendrical Computations*.
- Liu 劉. Surname of Western and Eastern Han imperial family.
- Liu An 劉安. King of Huainan, r. 164–122 BCE.
- Liu Ao 劉騫. King of Chu, r. 48–25/24 BCE.
- Liu Bang 劉邦. See Gaozu.
- Liu Boyu 劉伯玉, fl. late first century BCE. Probably a grandson of Liu Xiang and cousin of Liu Xin.
- Liu Dan 劉旦, d. 80 BCE. Son of Wudi and Concubine Li, became King of Yan in 117 BCE.
- Liu De 劉德. King of Hejian, r. 155–130/129 BCE; classicist.
- Liu Ding 劉定. King of Lu'an, r. 73–50 BCE.
- Liu Fu 劉輔, fl. 16 BCE. Originally from Hejian, became Advisory Counsellor under Chengdi.
- Liu Gong 劉龔, fl. 27 CE. Kinsman of Liu Xin, served Deng Zhongkuang and Yan Cen before submitting to Guangwu.
- Liu Guo 六國. Six Kingdoms, the six major kingdoms of the Zhanguo period (i.e., Chu, Han, Qi, Wei, Yan, and Zhao).
- Liu He 劉賀. King of Changyi, r. 86–74 BCE; became emperor after Zhaodi's death for a few months before being dethroned by Xuandi.
- Liu Hong 劉閔, d. 110 BCE. Son of Wudi and Lady Wang, made King of Qi in 117 BCE.
- Liu Ji 劉卬. Son of Liu Xiang.
- Liu Jia 劉嘉. King of Liang, r. 39–25 BCE.
- Liu Jiao 劉交. King of Chu, r. 201–179 BCE; younger brother of Gaozu and ancestor of Liu Xiang.
- Liu Jing 劉竟. Son of Xuandi (d. 35 BCE), King of Zhongshan from 43 BCE, posthumously named Ai 哀 and buried at Duling.
- Liu Ju 劉據, 128–91 BCE. Son of Wudi and Empress Wei 衛 and heir apparent from 122 to 91 BCE.
- Liu Kang 劉康. King of Dingtao, r. 25–23 BCE.
- Liu Kang Gong 劉康公. Lord Kang of Liu, fl. 590 BCE, Zhou vassal featured in *Zuozhuan*.
- Liu Li 劉立. King of Liang, r. 24 BCE–3 CE.
- liu li 六歷. Six calendars, the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
- Liu Liang 劉良. King of Hejian, r. 32–5 BCE.
- liu min 流民. People not on the tax registers.
- Liu Qin 劉欽. King of Huaiyang, r. 63–27 BCE.
- Liu Sheng 劉勝. King of Zhongshan, r. 154–112 BCE.
- Liu Wen 劉文. King of Chu, r. 24–23 BCE.
- Liu Wu 劉武. King of Liang, r. 168–144 BCE.
- Liu Xiang 劉向, 79/78–8 BCE. Late Western Han scholar and statesman.
- Liu Xiang suo xu* 劉向所序. *Compilations by Liu Xiang*.
- Liu Xin 劉欣. King of Dingtao, r. 22–8 BCE; became Aidi in 7 BCE.
- Liu Xin 劉歆, 46 BCE–23 CE. Son of Liu Xiang, scholar and statesman, changed his name to Liu Xiu 劉秀 in 6 BCE.
- Liu Xing 劉興. King of Zhongshan, r. 23–8? BCE.
- Liu Xu 劉胥, d. 54 BCE. Son of Wudi and Concubine Li, made King of Guangling in 117 BCE.
- Liu Yan 劉衍. King of Chu, r. 23–2 BCE.
- Liu Yao 六爻. Six-Line Text.
- Liu Yin 劉愔, fl. 21 CE. Liu Xin's daughter, married to Wang Mang's son and herself an accomplished astronomer/astrologer.
- Liu Yu 劉宇. King of Dongping, r. 52–20 BCE.
- Liu Yu 劉餘. King of Lu, r. 154–128 BCE; posthumously Gong 恭 (the Venerable); Archaic Script documents were found when the king demolished Confucius's residence to extend his palace.
- Liu Yuan 劉元. King of Hejian, r. 54–38 BCE.
- Liu Zhiji 劉知幾, 661–721 CE. Historian and author of *Shitong*.
- Liu Zong 六宗. Six Great Ones; interpreted by Wang Mang as Sun and Moon, Thunder and Wind, and the chief mountains and great rivers.
- Liufu Qu 六輔渠. Six Support Canals.
- Liuxia Hui 柳下惠. Local ruler in Liuxia district in Lu during the Chunqiu period, mentioned in the *Analects* 15.14, 18.2, 18.8 as a sometimes recluse willing to serve anyone,

- no matter how good or bad; personal name
Zhan Huo 展獲.
- “Liuyi lun” 六藝論. “On the Six Classics” (the Five Classics plus music).
- lizheng* 里正. Ward prefects.
- Local Candidates for the Examinations. See Wenxue.
- locust larvae. See *yuan* 蜃.
- Long Guan 隴關. Long Pass.
- Longshou Qu 龍首渠. Longshou (Dragon’s Head) Canal.
- Longshou Shan 龍首山. Longshou Mountains; high plain near Xi’an, oriented southeast–northwest, part of Longshou (Dragon’s Head) Plain.
- Longshou Yuan 龍首原. Dragon’s Head Plain.
- Longshouyuan 龍首原. Archaeological site near present-day Xi’an, site of Han cemetery.
- Longxi 隴西. Western Han commandery.
- Lou Hu 樓護, fl. 27 BCE–9 CE. Leader of the clients of the Wang consort clan.
- Lou Jiu Li Fucheng 樓舊里附城. Noble of Lou’s Old Ward. Compare Lou Jiu Li 樓舊里 (Lou’s Old Ward).
- Lu 魯. Home state of Confucius and one of the Central States during the pre-unification period.
- Lü 呂. Name of consort family in power 195–180 BCE.
- lu* 祿. Salary.
- Lü 旅. “The Wanderer,” hexagram 56.
- lǜ* 閭. Ward gate (i.e., gate for entering and exiting the ward).
- Lü Dafang 呂大防, 1027–1097 CE. Author of a map that overlaid Han and Tang Chang’an.
- Lü Hou 呂后. Empress Lü, empress of Gaozu, ruled in her own name from 188 to 180 BCE.
- Lu Jia 陸賈, ca. 228–140 BCE. Diplomat and author of *Xinyu* 新語.
- Lü Jizhu 呂季主, fl. 150 BCE. Joined Tian Shu’s intervention on behalf of King Xiao of Liang.
- Lu Kang 陸康, ca. 125–195 CE. Late Western Han administrator and adviser.
- “Lü li zhi” 律歷志. “Treatise on the Pitch Pipes and Calendar,” chapter 21 of *Hanshu*.
- Lu Qin 路寢. Roadside Chamber.
- “Lü shu” 律書. “Treatise on the Pitch Pipes,” chapter 25 of *Shiji*.
- Lu Wenshu 路溫舒, fl. 74–50 BCE. Legal specialist and reformer who successfully sought to simplify existing laws, also an astronomer.
- Lu Zhonglian 魯仲連. Third century BCE recluse.
- lǜ zuo* 閭左. Left of or in the *lǜ*.
- Lǜ Zuqian 呂祖謙, 1137–1181 CE. Southern Song scholar.
- luan* 亂. Epilogue.
- Lu’an 六安. Western Han kingdom.
- Lu’an wang chao wufeng er nian zhengyue qiju ji* 六安王朝五鳳二年正月起居記. *Notes on Everyday Life from the King of Lu’an’s Court Visit of the First Month of the Fifth Year of the Wufeng Reign Period* (53 BCE), manuscript excavated from M40 at Bajiaolang in 1973 and subsequently lost.
- Luan Ying 樂盈, fl. 552 BCE. Rival of Fan Xuanzi.
- Lude 鱣得. Name of county and city in Zhangye Commandery.
- lǜli* 閭里. Walled and gated wards.
- Luminous Terrace. See Lingtai.
- Lunyu* 論語. *Analects*, text that collects Confucius’s words and deeds, compiled in Western Han based on earlier lore.
- Luo Cheng Men 洛城門. Luo City Gate, easternmost of the three northern gates of Chang’an city.
- Luoyang 洛陽. Important metropolis in Western Han and capital of Eastern Han, situated in the Central Plains; also one of the Five Capitals in pre-unification times.
- Ma Gong 馬宮, fl. 2 BCE–11 CE. Student of Ling Feng and, as Da Situ, member of the Executive Council.
- Ma Xu 馬續, fl. 92–141 CE. Scholar and administrator at the frontier; worked with his brother Ma Rong 馬融 and Ban Zhao, Ban Gu’s sister, to complete *Hanshu* after Ban Gu’s death.
- Magistrate. See Ling.
- Maijing* 脈經. *Pulse Classic*, ascribed to Wang Shuhe.
- Mancheng 滿城. The location where Liu Sheng’s tomb was discovered.
- mang jiao* 芒角. Sharp/pointed corner.

- Mangdang Shan 芒碭山. Mangdang Mountains, site of the tombs of the Kings of Liang.
- Mao 毛. Commentarial tradition to the *Odes*, displaced other traditions by time of Eastern Han.
- Mao 卯. Fourth Earthly Branch.
- Maodun 冒頓. Leader (Chanyu) of the Xiongnu, ca. 207–174 BCE; credited with uniting the Xiongnu into an empire that rivaled Western Han.
- Maoling 茂陵. Maoling mausoleum of Wudi, northwest of Chang'an; Maoling mausoleum town 茂陵邑.
- marriage alliance. See *heqin*.
- Marshal of State. See *Da Sima*.
- Matou Cang 碼頭倉. Pier Granary.
- Mawangdui 馬王堆. Place near present-day Changsha (Hunan) and site of the three Mawangdui tombs from early Western Han.
- Mei Fu 梅福, fl. 30–10 BCE. Omen expert trained in the *Documents* and the *Guliang* who used his expertise against the Wang consort clan.
- men* 門. Gate or door.
- meng* 孟. First.
- Meng Kang 孟康, ca. 180–260 CE. Commentator.
- Meng Tian 蒙恬, d. 210 BCE. Qin general.
- Meng Xi 孟喜, fl. 47 BCE. *Changes* expert.
- Menglong Qu 蒙籠渠. Menglong Canal.
- Mengzi 孟子. Master Meng, a.k.a. Mencius or Meng Ke 孟軻.
- Mengzi* 孟子. *Master Meng*, text featuring dialogues with Mengzi.
- Metropolitan Area Commandant. See Sanfu Duwei.
- Metropolitan Commissioner. See Neishi.
- Mian Shui 沔水. Mian River, today called the Han River 漢水.
- Miaoji* 廟記. *Temple Record*, text cited in *Sanfu huangtu*.
- Million Bushel Granary. See Baiwan Shi Cang.
- Min Shui 岷水. Min River, in Sichuan.
- Min Shan 岷山. Min Mountains, in Sichuan.
- Ming Du 冥都. Student of Tang Xihui 堂谿惠 and Yan Anle.
- ming shen* 明審. Clear-sighted.
- Ming Tang 明堂. Devotional Hall or Hall of Dedication (conventionally rendered as Bright Hall).
- ming tian* 名田. Registered fields.
- Mingdi 明帝. Emperor Ming, Eastern Han emperor, r. 57–75 CE; personal name Liu Zhuang 劉莊.
- Mingguang Gong 明光宮. Mingguang Palace, in Chang'an city.
- mingqi* 明器. Spirit vessels, a subcategory of grave goods made in ceramic and other media.
- Mingyi lu* 名醫錄. *Record of Famous Healers*, a Tang-dynasty text.
- Miscellaneous Records on the Gongyang*. See *Gongyang zaji*.
- mishu* 祕書. Reserve writings (lit., secret writings).
- Missing Rituals*. See *Yili*.
- mizang* 祕藏. Palace repositories.
- mo* 陌. Intersection(?), also dividing ridges between farm plots.
- Mohist Defense of the Gongyang Tradition*. See *Gongyang Mo shou*.
- mother of all-under-Heaven. See *mu tianxia*.
- Mount Qi, Mount Tai, etc. See Qishan, Taishan, etc.
- Mozi 墨子, ca. 479–391 BCE. Philosopher and specialist in the defense of walled cities.
- Mr. Yan's Records on the Gongyang*. See *Gongyang Yanshi ji*.
- Mr. Yu's Annals*. See *Yushi chunqiu*.
- mu* 沐. Hair washing day, a holiday officials were entitled to once every five days.
- mu* 募. Recruit.
- mu* 畝. Unit of land area, roughly 465 square meters (in Han).
- mu tianxia* 母天下. (To be or act as) the mother of all-under-Heaven.
- Nalintaohai 納林套海. Place in Inner Mongolia.
- Nan Shan 南山. Southern Mountains (i.e., Qinling Mountains).
- "[Nan you] Jia yu" [南有] 嘉魚. "Barbel Fish," no. 171 of the *Odes*, correlated with Si 巳 in the Four Beginnings theory.
- Nan Zuoshi yi* 難左氏義. *Objections to the Zuo Commentary*.

Nanjing 難經. *Classic of Difficult Issues*, compiled first century CE(?).

Nanping Li 南平里. Nanping Ward, in Chang'an city.

Nanyang Jun 南陽郡. Nanyang Commandery, in present-day Henan, home region of the Eastern Han ruling family.

Neishi 內史. Metropolitan Commissioner, official who governed the Chang'an metropolitan area (in early Western Han); the leading kingdom official until position was abolished in 8 BCE.

neiwai 內外. Inner/outer.

nested inner and outer wooden coffins. See *guan guo*.

Ni Kuan 兒寬, d. 103 BCE. *Documents* scholar of poor background who became Imperial Counsellor in 110 BCE.

Nine Ministers. See Jiu Qing.

Ning Cheng 寧成, fl. 144–124 BCE. Acquired a large fortune in his home area after he was forced to abandon his career as an official.

nobles. See *hou*.

Noble's Domain. See Houguo.

"Northern Journey" *fu*. See *Bei zheng fu*.

not the standard classics. See *fei zheng jing*.

nuo 諾. Agreed.

Nüwa 女媧. Female of mythological primordial couple, often depicted on pictorial bricks from the Han period.

Objections to the Zuo Commentary. See *Nan Zuoshi yi*.

Offices of Zhou. See *Zhouguan*.

Orchid Pavilion. See Lan Tai.

Origin. See Yuan 元.

Original Allotment Guarantee of the Annals. See *Chunqiu yuanming bao*.

outer transmissions. See *waizhuan*.

outer wooden coffin. See *guo* 槨.

Ouyang Sheng 歐陽生. Master Ouyang, fl. second century BCE, student of Fu Sheng who transmitted his *Documents* tradition to Ni Kuan.

paishui xitong 排水系統. Sewage system.

palace proper. See *zheng gong*.

pan 盤. Broad basin.

Pan Yue 潘岳, 247–300 CE. Author of *Xi zheng*

fu and *Sheng fu*.

Panjiahuang 潘家庄. Site in southern suburbs of present-day Xi'an where a Qin cemetery was located.

Pei Jun 沛郡. Pei Commandery, in the area of present-day Xuzhou, and Gaozu's home region.

peizang mu 陪葬墓. Accompanying tombs, accompanying burials; tombs of those who have received, because of their merits or their status, the right to be buried next to an imperial, royal, or noble tomb, which sites were regarded as auspicious.

pen 盆. Basin.

Pengcheng 彭城. Place visited by the First Emperor during his southern tour, both a commandery and county during Western Han.

pengdang 朋黨. Cliques.

Pengzu 彭祖. Legendary figure renowned for his longevity.

Phoenix Towergate. See Feng Que.

pian 篇. Chapter, bamboo bundle.

Piaoji jiangjun 驃騎將軍. General of Cavalry on the Alert.

Pier Granary. See Matou Cang.

Ping Dang 平當, d. 4 BCE. Academician and statesman.

Ping Gong 平公. Lord Ping of Jin, r. 557–532 BCE.

Ping Yan 平晏, d. 20 CE. Trusted ally of Wang Mang and his Chancellor; in 5 CE he argued, with Liu Xin, in favor of restoring Altars to Heaven and Earth at Chang'an.

Pingdi 平帝. Emperor Ping of Western Han, r. 1 BCE–6 CE; personal name Liu Kan 劉衍.

"Pingjin Hou Zhufu Yan liezhuan" 平津侯主父列傳. "Biographies of the Noble of Pingjin and Zhufu Yan," chapter 112 of *Shiji*.

Pingling 平陵. Pingling mausoleum of Zhaodi, northwest of Chang'an; Pingling mausoleum town 平陵邑.

Pingtong Hou 平通侯. Noble Who Ensures Peace by Informing, noble title and privileges awarded to Yang Yun in 66 BCE.

po/bei chi 陂池. Slope pond, associated with a man-made slope.

Pole Temple. See Ji Miao.

Polestar. See Beiji Xing.

postal or courier system. See *you* 郵; *zhi* 置.
Provincial Shepherds. See Zhoumu.
“Purple Palace.” See Zi Gong.

Qi 杞. Ethnic group.

Qi 契. A legendary major under the sage-king Yao.

Qi 齊. One of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 221 BCE.

qi 氣. Spirit, vital energy.

“Qi fu” 祈父. “Minister of War,” no. 185 of the *Odes*, correlated with You 酉 in the Five Junctures theory.

qi haigu 乞骸骨. Request to return one’s bones to one’s place of origin.

Qi Li 戚里. Qi Ward, in Chang’an city.

qi wu 齊物. All things regarded as one and the same.

Qi Xi 祁奚, fl. 552 BCE. Retired Jin minister who won the release of Shuxiang from prison.

qi yun 期運. Period cycles.

qian 錢. Cash; metal coins of fairly low value, circular in shape with a center square (said to represent Heaven and Earth, respectively), usually counted by strings.

Qian Daxin 錢大昕, 1728–1804 CE. Scholar.

Qian Dian 前殿. Front Audience Hall, of Weiyang Palace.

Qian Shui 汧水. Qian River.

qian wen 潛溫. Secluded warmth.

Qibo 岐伯. Legendary healer of antiquity.

Qilüe 七略. *Seven Summaries*, Liu Xin’s catalogue of the imperial collections, offered to the throne in 6 BCE(?).

Qin 秦. State in Zhanguo period that unified the realm in 221, also refers to the postunification regime (nominally 221–207 BCE).

qin 琴. Zither.

qin dian 寢殿. Chamber of Rest, ritual structure in imperial mausoleums.

Qin Er Shi 秦二世. Second Emperor of Qin, r. 210–207 BCE; personal name Ying Huhai 嬴胡亥.

Qin Gongling 秦公陵. Mausoleum of a Lord of Qin, area near Yanling enclosing two large unidentified tombs.

“Qin Shihuang benji” 秦始皇本紀. “Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin,” chapter 6 of *Shiji*.

Qin Shihuang 秦始皇. First Emperor, r. 246–222 BCE as King of Qin, r. 221–210 BCE as First Emperor; personal name Ying Zheng 嬴政.

qin yuan 寢園. Park of Rest.

qing 頃. Measure of land, equivalent to 100 *mu*, or about 4.6 hectares.

Qing He 清河. Qing River.

Qingming Men 清明門. Qingming City Gate, middle gate of the three eastern gates of Chang’an city. Compare Qingming Men Dajie 清明門大街 (Qingming Gate Thoroughfare).

Qinian Gong 欽年宮. Qinian Palace complex, near Baoji.

Qinling Shan 秦嶺/嶺/山. Qinling Mountains.

qiong 窮. Privation.

Qiong Li 窮里. “Poor Wards,” in Chang’an city. According to Zhang Jihai, the term designates wards for the poor in general, not a particular ward.

Qishan 岐山. Mount Qi.

Qiu Ziming 丘子明, fl. 125 BCE. Diviner who became wealthy from the divinations he made at the time of Wudi’s foreign campaigns.

qu 區. (Residential) plot, a measure word for a residential unit (*zhuzhai* or *zhai*).

Qu 屈. Family of Chu that was relocated to Chang’an in early Western Han. Cf. Qu Yuan 屈原.

Qu Boyu 蘧伯玉. A.k.a. Qu Yuan 蘧瑗, mentioned in the *Analekts* as someone who failed to receive the recognition he deserved from his lord in Wei.

qu nian yi lai, yong shi 去年已來，用事. Governing affairs, since the previous year.

que 闕. Towergate, also gatetower.

Que Hu Men 却胡門. Resist Xiongnu Gate.

Queli 闕里. Home district of Confucius, in Shandong, mentioned in *Fengsu tongyi*.

quguan yinju 去官隱居. To resign from office and live in reclusion.

Qujiangchi 曲江池. Site in southeast of modern Xi’an where two tombs with murals were discovered (in 1985 and 2008 CE).

Quqin 毆禽. Master Huntsman, title of Yi in time of Yao.

quzhizang 屈肢葬. Flexed burial, corpse buried with flexed limbs.

- Rear General. See Hou Jiangjun.
- Records of the Taishi Gong*. See *Taishi Gong ji*.
- Regional Inspectors. See Cishi.
- ren 人. Human, social realm.
- ren 任. To sponsor. Compare “the *ren* privilege,” whereby a younger son or male relative of a high official was considered eligible for a post in the government.
- Ren Gong 任公. *Gongyang* scholar and student of Yan Anle.
- Ren Hong 任宏, fl. 26–8 BCE. Worked under Liu Xiang on the imperial catalogue, with responsibility for military texts; reached ministerial rank.
- Reservoir Pond. See Cang Chi.
- residence. See *di*.
- residential unit. See *zhuzhai*.
- restoration. See *fuli*.
- Rifa 日法. Day Method.
- Rites. See *Li*.
- Ritual Ceremonies*. See *Yili*.
- “Rizhe liezhuan” 日者列傳. “Biographies of the Diviners of Days,” chapter 127 of *Shiji*.
- roof tile ends. See *wadang*.
- ru 儒. Classicist, an expert in the Classics, only some of whom were ethical “Confucians.”
- ru chu 辱處. Shameful or despised occupation.
- Ru Chun 如淳, third century CE. Commentator to *Hanshu*.
- “Rulin liezhuan” 儒林列傳. “Biographies of the Classical Scholars,” chapter 121 of *Shiji*.
- “Rulin zhuan” 儒林傳. “Biographies of the Classical Scholars,” chapter 88 of *Hanshu*.
- Runan Jun 汝南郡. Runan Commandery, in present-day Anhui.
- ruo 弱. Weak.
- ruyi 乳醫. Court attendants who oversee the nursing of imperial children.
- ruzi 孺子. Babe in arms.
- san chui* 三垂. Ceding large tracts of parkland in three directions.
- San Gang 三綱. Three Main Relations.
- San Gong 三公. Three Lords, Executive Council, Three Lords of the Executive Council; collective name for the three senior statesmen: Chancellor, Imperial Counsellor, and Marshal of State.
- San Ji 三基. Three Bases.
- San Jin 三晉. Three Jin, joint designation for the three successor states of Jin (Zhao, Han, and Wei, partitioned in 403 BCE).
- San Nan 三難. Three Troubles, Three Trouble Points.
- San Nan yi ke* 三難異科. Three Troubles of disparate types.
- San Nan yi ke, za yan tong hui* 三難異科, 雜焉同會. “The Three Troubles, though of disparate types, are due to converge in time.”
- San Qi Zhi E 三七之厄. Three Times Seven Distresses.
- San Qi Zhi Jie Ji 三七之節紀. Conjunction of Three Times Seven.
- San Qin ji* 三秦記. *Record of the Capital Area*, a Han-dynasty text.
- San Shi 三世. Three Ages.
- San Tai 三台. Treble Platform, six-star constellation in Ursa Major.
- San Tong 三統. Three Concordances, Three Dispensations, or Three Governors; the three months that govern the start of the year Xia (thirteenth month), Shang (twelfth month), and Zhou (eleventh month).
- San Tong li* 三統歷. Triple Concordance calendrical system introduced ca. 9 CE, attributed to Liu Xin and based on the *Annals*.
- San Wang 三王. Three True Kings.
- “San wang shijia” 三王世家. “Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings,” chapter 60 of *Shiji*.
- San Zheng 三正. Three First Months.
- “Sandai shibiao” 三代世表. “Table of the Three Dynasties,” chapter 13 of *Shiji*.
- Sanfu 三輔. Three Supports, collective term for the Jingzhao Yin, the Youfufeng, and the Zuo Pingyi (i.e., officials who after 104 BCE governed the three parts of the metropolitan area); the term also designates the area under Sanfu control.
- Sanfu Duwei 三輔都尉. Metropolitan Area Commandant.
- Sanfu huangtu* 三輔黃圖. *Plan of the Three Capital Regions*, or *Three Capital Regions* for short.
- Sanfu jiushi* 三輔舊事. *Old Matters of the Three Capital Regions*.
- Sang Hongyang 桑弘羊, 152–80 BCE. Imperial Counsellor famous for his skillful economic management; executed.

- Sanmen Xia 三門峽. Sanmen Gorges (a.k.a. Three Gates).
- Sanyong Gong 三雍宮. The Three Palaces of Harmony. According to Ying Shao, the three were the Circular Moat, the Devotional Hall, and the Luminous Terrace.
- se 瑟. Zither, psaltery.
- seal. See *xi*.
- Second Emperor. See Qin Er Shi.
- Secretariat. See Shangshu.
- Shan Lang 山郎. Court Officials with Riches Piled Up (lit., [like] Mountains [rich in resources]), nickname for wealthy court officials.
- Shang 商. Dynasty, overthrown by Zhou, ca. 1050 BCE.
- Shang Jun 上郡. Shang Commandery, in the northern part of present-day Shaanxi.
- Shang Jun shu* 商君書. *Writings of Lord Shang*, attributed to Shang Yang.
- Shang Yang 商鞅, d. 338 BCE. Statesman and bold reformer under Lord Xiao of Qin.
- Shangguan Li 尚冠里. Shangguan Ward, in Chang'an city.
- Shanghan zabing lun* 傷寒雜病論. *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*, ascribed to Zhang Zhongjing, early third century CE.
- Shanglin fu* 上林賦. "Shanglin Park" *fu*.
- Shanglin Yuan 上林園. Shanglin Park.
- Shangshu* 尚書. *Documents* classic.
- Shangshu 尚書. Secretariat, Court Secretariat.
- Shangshu Hongfan* 尚書洪範. *The Documents' Great Plan*.
- Shangshu Lang 尚書郎. Courtiers of the Secretariat.
- Shangshu yun qi shou* 尚書運期授. *Cycle Periods of the Documents*.
- Shangyong 上庸. Place in Hanzhong.
- Shanyang 山陽. Western Han kingdom.
- Shanyu 單于. Older transcription of the title Chanyu for the Xiongnu leader. See also Chanyu.
- shao 勺. Ladle.
- Shao Hao 少昊. Legendary ruler of antiquity.
- Shao Xinchun 邵信臣, fl. 33 BCE. Successful commandery Governor and Commissioner of the Lesser Treasury.
- Shaodi 少帝. Infant emperor, enthroned by Empress Lü between 188 and 184 BCE, a.k.a. Shaodi Gong 少帝恭.
- Shaoling 少陵. Northeast of Dongcao village, in Dazhao 大兆 township.
- Shaoshi 少師. Legendary healer of antiquity.
- shaoyang 少陽. Young yang.
- shaoyin 少陰. Young yin.
- Shaoyu 少俞. Legendary healer of antiquity.
- "She Jiang" 涉江. "Crossing the Yangzi," in the "Jiuzhang" of *Chuci*.
- she San Qi Zhi Jie Ji* 涉三七之節紀. Approaching the conjunction of Three Times Seven.
- Sheji 社稷. Altars to Soil and Grain.
- Shen 申. Ninth Earthly Branch.
- Shen Gong 申公, a.k.a. Shen Pei 申培, d. ca. 139 BCE. Famous *Odes* scholar and teacher.
- Shen Nong 神農. Divine Husbandman, legendary ruler of antiquity.
- sheng 升. Unit for measuring grain, approximately 200 milliliters in Han times.
- Sheng fu* 笙賦. "Panpipes" *fu*, by Pan Yue.
- Shennong bencao jing* 神農本草經. *Divine Husbandman's Pharmacopeia*, compiled first century CE(?).
- shi 始. Beginning.
- shi 石. Bushel, measure for the salaries of officials; the word was later pronounced "dan."
- shi 史. Clerk.
- shi 使. Envoy.
- Shi 使. Inspector.
- shi 士. Man-in-service.
- shi 市. Market, or spatial unit comprising 4 *li*.
- Shi 詩. *Odes* classic, one of the Five Classics.
- shi 詩. Song.
- shi cheng liu er xuan hua* 使承流而宣化. "Propagate our heritage and culture."
- Shi Chou 施讎, fl. 51 BCE. *Changes* scholar who received appointment as Academician and participated in the 51 BCE conference on classical scholarship at Shiqu Ge.
- Shi Dan 史丹, d. 13 BCE. General beginning in 29 BCE and member of the Shi family that had lent protection to Xuandi when he was still a commoner.
- Shi Dan 師丹, d. 3 CE. Influential statesman and student of Kuang Heng.
- Shi Di 石堤/石澍/石激. Stone Dike, built under Han Wudi.
- Shi fan lishu* 詩汜歷樞. *The Overflowing Calendrical Pivot Attached to the Odes*.

- shi junzi* 士君子. Scholars and gentlemen.
- Shi Mai 石買, fl. 556 BCE. Of Wei, led attack against Cao and was defeated by Jin at Changzi.
- Shi nei zhuan* 詩內傳. *Inner Traditions to the Odes*.
- shi pian que, you lu wu shu* 十篇缺, 有錄無書. “Ten chapters are missing [or: lacking some part?], there is a record of them but no text,” a statement in the *Hanshu* on the *Shiji*. Contrast *shi pian wei cheng, you lu er yi* 十篇未成, 有錄而已 (“The ten chapters had not yet been completed, there were only entries [in the inventory]”), Liu Zhiji’s statement on the ten missing chapters of the *Shiji*.
- Shi Xian 石顯, fl. 48–32 BCE. Eunuch and favorite of Yuandi, became Director of the Palace Writers.
- Shi Yi 侍醫. Physician in Attendance, title of an office in the Han central government.
- “Shi yue zhi jiao” 十月之交. “Tenth Month Conjunction,” no. 193 of the *Odes*, correlated with Xu 戊 in the Five Junctures theory.
- Shi Zhao 史趙. Diviner Zhao, critic of Lord Ping of Jin (see *Zuozhuan*).
- Shi Zong 世宗. Ancestor of the Generations, title bestowed upon Wudi, as proposed by Liu Xin and Wang Shun.
- Shiji* 史記. *Archivists’ Record*, history starting with Yellow Emperor to ca. 100 BCE, by Sima Tan and Qian. The title is traditionally rendered as *Records of the Grand Historian* or *Records of the Historian*.
- Shiji suoyin* 史記索引. *Tracing References in the Shiji*, commentary to *Shiji* by Sima Zhen (early eighth century CE).
- Shiji zhengyi* 史記正義. *Corrected Meanings in the Shiji*, preface dated 737 CE, commentary to *Shiji* by Zhang Shoujie.
- Shijianguo 始建國. Reign period, 9–14 CE.
- shijin* 市斤. “Market jin,” a unit of weight, about 500 grams.
- Shijing* 世經. *Passage of the Generations*, by Liu Xin.
- Shike 噬嗑. “Biting Through,” hexagram 21.
- Shiqu Ge 石渠閣. Shiqu Canal, site of the Stone Canal Pavilion; building in the north of the Weiyang Palace complex housing archives and secret collections; name of the conference on classical scholarship that took place at the site in 51 BCE.
- Shitong* 史通. *Thorough Discussion of History*, by Liu Zhiji, compiled 710 CE.
- Shiwei* 詩緯. Apocryphal text(s) related to the *Odes*.
- shiwu* 什伍. “Fives or tens,” that is, rank and file; basic units in which the population was organized.
- Shiyi 侍醫. Physician in Attendance.
- shiyi* 食醫. *Yi* of foodstuffs.
- Shizhong 侍中. Palace Attendant.
- Shou 守. Governor of a commandery. See also Taishou.
- shou* 守. Guard, or guardian. Hence *shouling* 守陵 (guardians’ tombs, assigned to guard a mausoleum complex).
- Shou shi* 授時. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
- shouyi* 獸醫. *Yi* of beasts.
- Shu* 書. *Documents* classic, one of the Five Classics. See also *Shangshu*.
- Shu* 樞. Pivot, first star of Northern Dipper.
- shu* 術. Technical literature.
- Shu Guang* 疏廣, fl. 67 BCE. Served as Tutor to future Yuandi.
- Shu Guo* 屬國. Dependent State.
- shu jin* 數盡. Final numbers.
- Shu Jun* 蜀郡. Shu Commandery, in present-day Sichuan; ancient kingdom mentioned in Master Chu’s writings.
- shu shu* 數術. Mathematical technique, reckoning art, technical texts.
- shui liu yu wu xing fa xie hu tai qing* 水流乎无形, 发泄乎太清. Like water (the Realized Person) flows into the Formless and issues forth from Grand Clarity.
- Shuiheng Duwei 水衡都尉. Commissioner of Waterways and Parks.
- Shuihudi 睡虎地. Archaeological site in present-day Hubei, with tombs containing texts from Qin and Han on bamboo and wooden boards.
- Shuijing zhu* 水經注. *Water Classic Commentary*, compiled ca. 525 CE by Li Daoyuan.
- shuixiang* 水箱. Stone tank, cistern.
- Shuiyuan/Shuoyuan* 說苑. *Profusion of Persuasions*, by Liu Xiang, presented in 17 BCE.
- Shun 舜. Legendary sage king of antiquity,

- known for his filial piety, also named Yu 虞.
- Shundi 順帝. Emperor Shun of Eastern Han, r. 125–144 CE; personal name Liu Bao 劉保.
- shuo 朔. New moon.
- Shuofang Jun 朔方郡. Shuofang Commandery, in southern and central parts of present-day Inner Mongolia.
- Shuowen jiezi 說文解字. *Explications of Words and Phrases*, by Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58–147 CE).
- shuren 庶人. Commoner.
- Shusun Tong 叔孫通, fl. 195 BCE. Academician under Qin, designed state rituals in early Western Han.
- Shuxiang 叔向. Jin noble of the Chunqiu period with whom Liu Xin identified.
- Si 巳. Sixth Earthly Branch.
- si che 私車. Private carriages.
- Si Fen 四分. Quarter Remainder; method used to calculate intercalary months under Qin and in Western Han, in use until 105 BCE, restored in Eastern Han under Zhangdi.
- Si Hao 四皓. Four Greybeards, four elderly men called to advise Han Gaozu on the succession.
- “Si mu” 四牡. “Four Steeds,” no. 162 of the *Odes*, correlated with Yin 寅 in the Four Beginnings theory.
- si nubi 私奴婢. Private slaves (male and female).
- si sai zhi gu 四塞之固. Area fast within the barriers on all four sides.
- Si Sheng 駟勝, fl. 33 BCE. Academician who interpreted dust storm omen.
- Si Shi 四始. Four Beginnings.
- Si Shui 泗水. Si River.
- si tian 私田. Private field.
- Si Zhi 四時. Four Altars, at Yong, devoted to the Four Powers (Di 帝) in Qin times.
- Sibu beiyao 四部備要. Series of texts published by Zhonghua shuju.
- Sikou 司寇. Title of an official in some of the kingdoms in pre-imperial times.
- Sili Xiaowei 司隸校尉. Colonel of Internal Security.
- Sima 司馬. Major, title of Qi in time of Yao.
- Sima Qian 司馬遷, 145?–86? BCE. Author of *Shiji* who succeeded his father as Taishi Ling.
- Sima Tan 司馬談, d. ca. 110 BCE. Taishi Ling at Wudi’s court and father to Sima Qian, wrote some part of the *Shiji*.
- “Sima Xiangru liezhuan” 司馬相如列傳. “Biography of Sima Xiangru,” chapter 117 of *Shiji*.
- Sima Zhen 司馬貞, ca. 656–720 CE. Author of *Shiji suoyin*.
- Siqi 虢祁. Palace or terrace constructed by Lord Ping of Jin in Xiasi.
- Sishui 泗水. Kingdom in Western Han.
- Six Great Ones. See Liu Zong.
- Six Kingdoms. See Liu Guo.
- Six Support Canals. See Liufu Qu.
- Slender Willow Granary. See Xiliu Cang.
- Slender Willow Plain. See Xiliu Yuan.
- sloping entryway/access ramp. See *xiepo mudao*.
- “Song” 頌. “Hymns,” section of the *Odes* classic.
- Song Minqiu 宋敏求, fl. 1076 CE. Author of *Chang’an zhitu*.
- spirit vessels. See *mingqi*.
- spring. See *chun*.
- “Spring Officers.” See “Chun Guan.”
- Stone Canal Pavilion. See Shiqu Ge.
- Stone Dike. See Shi Di.
- Straight Road. See Zhidao.
- straight-limb burial. See *zhizhizang*.
- su feng 素封. Untitled nobility.
- su fu 素服. Undyed mourning clothes.
- Su Jian 蘇建, fl. 128–120 BCE. Military man active in the campaigns of foreign expansion during Wudi’s reign.
- Su Jing 蘇竟, fl. 27 CE. *Changes and Documents* scholar.
- Su Ling 蘇令, d. 14 BCE. Leader of revolt by the Iron Monopoly workers.
- su qiang wu jibing 素強無疾病. Had always been fit and strong, with no chronic illnesses.
- Su Qin 蘇秦, 380–284 BCE. Rhetorician of the Zhanguo period.
- Su Wu 蘇武, d. 80 BCE. Longtime captive of the Xiongnu and son of Su Jian.
- Su Yu 蘇輿, 1874–1914 CE. Scholar.
- Sui 隋. Dynasty, 581–618 CE.
- Sui chu fu 遂初賦. “Fulfilling My Original Resolve” *fu*, by Sun Chuo.
- Sui chu fu 遂初賦. “Obtaining My First Official Post” *fu*, by Liu Xin.

- Sui Meng 眭孟, a.k.a. Sui Hong 眭弘, d. 78 BCE. Student of the *Gongyang* who was put to death for an omen interpretation that predicted the end of Han.
- Sun Bao 孫寶, fl. 29 BCE–2 CE. Student of Guan Lu and, as Da Sinong, member of the Executive Council.
- Sun Chuo 孫綽, 314–371 CE. Author of *Sui chu fu*.
- Sun Huizong 孫會宗, fl. 56 BCE. Friend of Yang Yun who warned Yun to keep a low profile after his demotion; addressee of Yang Yun's letter.
- Sun Kuai 孫蒯, fl. 556 BCE. Wei leader who attacked Cao.
- Sun Shui 孫水. Sun River.
- Sun Zhu 孫殊, *zi* Juyuan 巨源, 1032–1080 CE. Possible compiler of *Guwen yuan*.
- Sunzi 孫子. Legendary military strategist of the pre-imperial period and reported author of a military classic.
- Susǒng chi* 愁城誌. *Record of the City of Grief*, historical novel by Im Che.
- suwei* 宿衛. Palace guard.
- Suwen* 素問. *Basic Questions*.
- “Table of Meritorious Subjects.” See “Gong chen biao.”
- “Table of Officers and Ministers.” See “Bai guan gong qing biao.”
- Tai 泰. “Greatness,” hexagram 11.
- Tai Cang 太倉. Great Granary or Great Storehouse.
- Tai Hao(di) 太昊(帝). Alternative name for Fu Xi/Fuxi.
- Tai Ping 太平. Great Peace, described an era (often in the future).
- “Tai shi” 泰誓. “Great Oath,” *Documents* chapter, supposedly added to Fu Sheng's text during the reign of either Wudi or Xuandi.
- Tai Zhi 太畤. Grand Altar(s), site(s) where emperor(s) worshipped the high gods. NB: The sites for Wudi and Wang Mang were in different places.
- Taichang 太常. Commissioner for Ceremonial, one of the Nine Ministers.
- Taichu 太初. Grand Inception/Great Beginning; reign periods, 104–101 BCE (Wudi), 5 BCE (Aidi); also a calendrical system beginning 104 BCE.
- Taiguan 太官. Director of Provisions.
- Taihang 太行. Mountain range that forms northern border of Henei.
- Taihuang Taihou 太皇太后. Grand Empress Dowager.
- Taijie 太階. Grand Stairway, asterism that represents the imperial court.
- Tailu yaolu* 胎臚藥錄. *Record of Medicine for the Developing Fetus and Head*.
- Taiping yulan* 太平御覽. *Read by the Emperor in the Taiping Era* [976–984 CE], encyclopedic collection compiled in the Taiping era of Northern Song, but consisting of fragments of earlier texts (many of which are now lost).
- Taipu 太僕. Commissioner for Transport.
- taiqing* 太清. Grand purity, grand clarity.
- Taishan 泰山. Mount Tai, site of *feng* and *shan* sacrifices.
- Taishi 太始. Reign period, 96–92 BCE.
- Taishi Gong 太史公. Lord Grand Archivist, author of concluding remarks to many chapters of *Shiji*.
- Taishi Gong ji* 太史公記. *Records of the Taishi Gong*, Chu Shaosun's name for *Shiji*.
- Taishi Ling 太史令. Director of Astronomy.
- Taishou 太守. Governor of a commandery. See also Shou.
- Taiwei 太尉. Supreme Commander.
- Taixue 太學. Imperial Academy.
- Taiyi 太一. Grand Unity.
- Taizhong Dafu 太中大夫. Grand Counsellor of the Palace.
- Taizhu* 太祝. Director of Prayers.
- Taizi Taifu 太子太傅. Senior Tutor to the Heir Apparent.
- Taizong 太宗, Grand Ancestor, posthumous title of Wendi.
- Taizu 太祖. Grand Progenitor, posthumous title of Liu Bang (also Gaozu, or High Ancestor).
- Tang 唐. Dynasty, 618–907 CE.
- Tang 湯. Founder of the Shang or Yin royal house.
- Tang Yan 唐晏, 1857–1920 CE. Late Qing scholar of Manchu origins, author of *Liang Han Sanguo xue'an* (*Record of Scholarship during the Han and Three Kingdom Periods*).
- Tangdi 唐帝. Title or name of the mythological emperor Yao. See Yao.

- tangye* 湯液. Decoctions.
- Tao Zhu Gong 陶朱公. His Honor Zhu of Tao.
- teng* 騰. Post-horse (lit., racer).
- Teng Mingyu 滕銘予. Archaeologist.
- thoroughfare. See *jie* or *dajie* (great thoroughfare).
- Three Ages. See San Shi.
- Three Jin. See San Jin.
- Three Lords. See San Gong.
- Three Main Relations. See San Gang.
- Three Supports. See Sanfu.
- Tian 田. Family of Qi that was relocated to Chang'an in early Western Han.
- Tian 天. Heaven.
- tian* 天. Heavens, cosmos, nature.
- "Tian bao" 天保. "Heaven Protects," no. 166 of the *Odes*, correlated with Mao in the Five Junctures theory.
- Tian Di 天帝. Lord of Heaven (sometimes Heaven and the Di).
- tian di li shu dang ran ye* 天地歷數當然也. The computational numbers of Heaven and Earth are just so.
- Tian Gan 天干. Heavenly Stems, a series of ten that combines with Earthly Branches.
- "Tian guan shu" 天官書. "Treatise on Astronomy," chapter 27 of *Shiji*.
- Tian Han 天漢. Reign period, 100–97 BCE.
- Tian Heng 田橫, d. ca. 202 BCE, member of Qi royal family who committed suicide en route to his surrender to Gaozu.
- Tian Men 天門 Heaven's Gate, temporal node located between Xu and Hai in the Three Times Seven theory.
- Tian Ming 天命 Heaven's Mandate or Decree.
- tian qi wu ren* 闡其無人. Lit., "alone, there is no one," meaning "devoid of good men."
- Tian Ren 田仁, fl. 119–91 BCE. Son of Tian Shu.
- tian shi* 天時. Lit., "Heaven's time," the time ordained by Heaven.
- tian shu* 天數. Heavenly figure, usually referring to cosmic regularities.
- Tian Shu 田叔, fl. 202–150 BCE. Governor and kingdom official, intervened on behalf of King Xiao of Liang when the king was accused of murder.
- "Tian Shu liezhuan" 田叔列傳. "Biography of Tian Shu," chapter 104 of *Shiji*.
- Tianchou 田疇. Director of Agricultural Fields, title of Houji in time of Yao.
- Tiandi 天帝. See Tian Di.
- Tianguan li* 天官歷. *Heavenly Officers' Calendar*, by Gan Zhongke.
- Tianji 天極. Heavenly Apex, a star.
- Tianjing 天井. Heavenly Well, a pass through the Taihang Mountains.
- Tianqi Ci 天齊祠. Tianqi Shrine.
- Tianshui Jun Jun 天水郡. Tianshui Commandery, in southeastern Gansu.
- Tiansi 天駟. Celestial Quadriga.
- Tianzi 天子 Son of Heaven.
- Tiao Miao 祧廟. Temple to Remote Ancestors.
- ting* 亭. Lower-level administrative and place unit, also market pavilion.
- Tingwei 廷尉. Commissioner of Trials.
- tong* 通. Cases(?).
- tong* 統. Govern.
- tong* 桐. Tree.
- Tong Guan 潼關. Tong Pass.
- Tongdi 銅鞮. County in Shangdang Commandery, in present-day Shanxi.
- tonglei* 同類. Of the same kind.
- Tongtian* 統天. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
- tongxing* 同姓. Of the same surname.
- towergate. See *que*.
- transmitted words by "outside" scholars. See *waijia chuanyu*.
- traveling palace. See *li gong*; *xing gong*.
- tripod. See *ding*.
- tu chen*. See *chen tu*.
- Tuanci 彖辭. Judgments, one of the Ten Wings of the *Changes*; also statements attached to hexagrams.
- tui'en* 推恩. "Extending generosity," a policy for dividing kingdoms initiated during Wudi's reign.
- tukeng shuxue mu* 土坑豎穴墓. Vertical pit tomb, shaft tomb.
- tun tian* 屯田. Frontier colony.
- Tunliu 屯留. Capital of Jin during the Chunqiu period, in present-day Shanxi.
- Tutor. See Fu 傅.
- underlying essentials. See *wei*.
- Underlying Essentials of Mr. Duo*. See *Duoshi wei*.
- undyed mourning clothes. See *su fu*.

Vertical and Horizontal Alliances. See Zongheng.

vertical pit tomb. See *tukeng shuxue mu*.

wadang 瓦當. Roof tile ends.

Waidu Li 外杜里. Waidu Ward, in Chang'an city.

waijia chuanyu 外家傳語. Transmitted words by "outside" scholars, meaning those not specializing in the classics.

waiqi 外戚. Consort clans, imperial distaff relatives.

"Waiqi Shijia" 外戚世家. "Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor," chapter 49 of *Shiji*.

waizhuan 外傳. Outer transmissions.

Wan 宛. Capital of Nanyang Commandery, one of the Five Capitals (i.e., great metropolitan centers), in present-day Henan.

wang 王. King.

wang 望. Name of a sacrifice.

Wang 王. Relatives of Chengdi's mother, formed the most powerful consort family of late Western Han.

Wang Bao 王褒, fl. 7 BCE. Known for dramatic, unauthorized entry in an imperial palace.

Wang Chong 王充, 27–97 CE. Author of *Lunheng* (*Discourses Weighed in the Balance*).

Wang Feng 王鳳, d. 22 BCE. Senior member of the Wang consort clan who, as Marshal of State, dominated the government from 33 to 22 BCE.

Wang Furen 王夫人. Lady Wang, fl. 122–117 BCE, consort of Wudi and mother of Liu Hong.

Wang Gen 王根, d. 6 BCE. Member of the Wang consort clan, succeeded Wang Shang as Marshal of State in 12 BCE, suffered loss of power in 8 BCE and was forced to leave the capital during Aidi's reign.

wang gu 往古. In the remote past.

Wang Hong 王閼, fl. 15 BCE–23 CE. Member of the Wang consort clan, argued in favor of halting the construction of the imperial mausoleum at Changling.

Wang Houzhi 王厚之, 1132–1204 CE. Possible compiler of *Guwen yuan*.

Wang Hui 王恢, d. 133 BCE. Senior official.

Wang Isle. See Wangzhu.

Wang Ji 王吉, d. ca. 48 BCE. Student of the *Odes* and the *Analects* and a principled adviser.

Wang Jun 王駿, d. 15 BCE. Son of Wang Ji, became Imperial Counsellor in 20 BCE.

Wang Li 王立, d. 3 CE. Uncle of Chengdi and commander of the troops at the city gates.

Wang Lu Tang 王路堂. Hall of the Royal Road.

Wang Mang 王莽, r. 9–23 CE. Member of the Wang consort clan, proclaimed a dynasty in his own name in 9 CE after he had accumulated special powers in several stages.

Wang Shang 王商, d. 25 BCE. Chancellor beginning in 29 BCE, unrelated to the Wang consort clan, clashed with Marshal of State Wang Feng.

Wang Shang 王商, d. 12 BCE. Leading member of Wang consort clan, succeeded Wang Yin as Marshal of State from 15 to 12 BCE.

Wang Shi 王式, fl. 74 BCE. *Odes* scholar associated with the King of Changyi.

Wang Shuhe 王叔和, a.k.a. Wang Xi 王熹, ca. third century CE.

Wang Shun 王舜, d. 11 CE. Son of Wang Yin and staunch ally of Wang Mang, argued with Liu Xin against the dismantling of shrines visited often by Wudi for his personal welfare.

Wang Xianqian 王先謙, 1842–1918 CE. Scholar.

Wang Yan 王彥. Disciple of Yan Anle.

Wang Yin 王音, d. 15 BCE. Member of Wang consort clan, succeeded Wang Feng as Marshal of State in 22 BCE.

wang you dong yao zhi xin 亡有動搖之心. "Not to bother the common people."

Wang Zhang 王章, d. 24/23 BCE. Outspoken critic during the reign of Yuandi and a trusted adviser of Chengdi, ran afoul of Wang Feng and died in prison.

Wang Zhengjun 王政君, 71 BCE–13 CE. Empress of Yuandi, mother of Chengdi, aunt of Wang Mang; exercised enormous influence on political life from the accession of Chengdi until her death; held various titles, including Huanghou (48 BCE), Huang Taihou (33 BCE), and Taihuang Taihou (7 BCE).

"Wang Zhi" 王制. "True King's Regulations," chapter of *Liji*.

Wang Zhi 王姁, d. 126 BCE. Jingdi's empress

- and Wudi's mother, with a daughter from a previous marriage.
- Wang Zhong 王中. Disciple of Yan Anle.
- Wang Zun 王尊, fl. 48–29 BCE. Official during the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, accused Huang Heng and Zhang Tan of having colluded with Shi Xian.
- Wangming lun 王命論. “On the Mandate of Kings,” essay by Ban Biao that argues that the Liu family held the Mandate because Heaven willed it so, and not through a stroke of good luck.
- Wangzhu 枉渚. Wang Isle.
- waning days. See *ji shi*.
- ward. See *li* 里; *lidian* (for ward directors).
- Way and Its Power. See Dao De.
- Wei 魏. Dynasty, 220–265 CE; also a rival clan in Jin, fifth century BCE; also one of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 225 BCE.
- Wei 衛. One of the Central States during the Chunqiu period.
- wei* 微. Underlying essentials, also nascent or hidden trends.
- Wei He 渭河. Wei River.
- Wei Hong 衛宏, fl. 25 CE. Advocate for Archaic Script learning in early Eastern Han.
- Wei Leng 韋稜, fl. ca. 500–550 CE. Wrote short biography of Chu Shaosun.
- Wei Lü 魏律. Wei Statutes.
- Wei Qu 滹渠. Wei Canal.
- Wei Wan 衛綰, d. 130 BCE. Statesman during the reigns of Wendi, Jingdi, and Wudi.
- Wei Wang 威王. King Wei of Chu, r. 339–329 BCE.
- Wei Xian 韋賢, fl. 76–67 BCE. Chancellor who retired while in office and requested to be buried in his home area.
- Wei Xuancheng 韋玄成, d. 36 BCE. Prominent statesman and scholar, implicated in demise of Yang Yun, proposed abolition of some shrines during Yuandi's reign.
- Wei Zhao 韋昭, 204–273 CE. Historian of the Three Kingdom state of Wu, author quoted in extant commentaries to *Hanshu*.
- wei zheng* 委政. “Entrust the government” to another.
- Weicheng 渭城. Wei city; also a county in Youfeng to the northwest of Chang'an city, called Xianyang under Qin.
- Weiwei 衛尉. Commissioner of the Guards.
- Weiyang Gong 未央宮. Weiyang Palace, in the southwest sector of Chang'an city.
- Weiyang Weiwei 未央衛尉. Commissioner of the Guards, Weiyang Palace.
- wen* 文. Decorative, refined.
- Wen Wang 文王. King Wen of Western Zhou, r. 1099/1056–1050 BCE.
- Wendi 文帝. Emperor Wen of Western Han, r. 180–157 BCE; personal name Liu Heng 劉恆.
- wenjia* 文家. Proponents of “refinements,” featured in *Bohu tong*.
- Wenxue 文學. Local and Actual Candidates for the title of Textual Scholar.
- “Western Capital” *fu*. See *Xijing fu*.
- Western Han. See Xi Han.
- Western Jin. See Xi Jin.
- Western Market. See Xi Shi.
- “Western Metropolis” *fu*. See *Xidu fu*.
- Western Zhou. See Xi Zhou.
- White Canal. See Bai Qu.
- women's sleeping apartments. See *yeting*.
- wooden coffin. See *guan* 棺.
- wooden coffin chamber. See *guo* 槨.
- wu* 惡. Hate, loathe.
- wu* 武. Martial.
- Wu 午. Seventh Earthly Branch.
- Wu De 五德. Five Powers.
- Wu De zhongshi* 五德終始. Five Powers cycle.
- Wu Di 五帝. Five Lords, associated with different directions and colors; worshiped at the Five Altars.
- “Wu [di ben] ji” 武紀. “Basic Annals of Emperor Wu,” chapter 12 of *Shiji*.
- Wu Du 五都. Five Capitals (i.e., Chengdu, Handan, Linzi, Luoyang, and Wan).
- Wu Guan 武關. Wu Pass.
- Wu Ji 五際. Five Junctures.
- Wu ji lun* 五紀論. *On the Five Cycles*, by Liu Xiang.
- wu jue* 無決. Without deliberation.
- Wu Ku 武庫. Arsenal (sometimes translated as Armory).
- Wu Qi 吳起. Military strategist of the Zhanguo period and reported author of a military classic.
- wu ru zhi chu* 汙辱之處. A shameful position.
- Wu Shi 五始. Five Beginnings, theory in *Annals*

- interpretation based on standard first phrases in *Annals* entries.
- Wu Wang 武王. King Wu of Western Zhou, r. 1049/1045–1043 BCE.
- Wu Xing 五星. Five Planets.
- “Wu xing zhi” 五行志. “Treatise on the *Wuxing*,” chapter 27 of *Hanshu*.
- Wu Zheng 五徵. Five Proofs.
- Wu Zhi 五峙. Five Altars at Yong, dedicated to the Five Powers.
- Wu’an 武安. Place in Hebei where Zhao She halted before relieving the Qin siege of Yanyu.
- wubai nian bi you wangzhe xing 五百年必有王者興. “Every five hundred years will see a true king arise.”
- Wuchang 武昌. Area in present-day Hubei Province.
- Wudi 武帝. Emperor Wu of Western Han, r. 141–87 BCE; personal name Liu Che 劉徹. For Wudi’s Maoling, see Maoling.
- Wufeng 五鳳. Reign period, 57–54 BCE.
- Wuling 五陵. Five Mausoleums, the five most impressive imperial mausoleums north of Chang’an, with mausoleum towns attached (E–W: Yangling, Changling, Anling, Pingling, Maoling).
- Wuling Wang 武靈王. King Wuling of Zhao, r. 325–299 BCE.
- Wulu Chongzong 五鹿充宗, fl. ca. 37 BCE. Official during Yuandi’s reign, part of Shi Xian’s clique, had expertise in the *Changes* and the *Analects*.
- Wuwang 无妄. “No Hope,” hexagram 25.
- Wuwang Zhi Gua Yun 无妄之卦運. Hexagram Cycle at Wuwang.
- wuwei/hui 蕪穢. Overgrown with weeds.
- Wuxing 五行. Five Phases, that is, Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water (according to one order, the Production Order favored by Liu Xin); elsewhere, Five Conducts, Five Planets, etc.
- Wuyuan Jun 五原郡. Wuyuan Commandery, just east of Shuofang and north of the Great Bend of the Yellow River, near present-day Baotou in Inner Mongolia.
- Wuzhou 婺州. Place name in Song times, present-day Jinhua, Zhejiang.
- Wuzuo Gong 五柞宮. Five Oak Palace.
- xi 璽. Seal.
- xi 徙. Transferred.
- Xi Ge 西閣. Western Pavilion.
- Xi Gong 僖公. Lord Xi of Lu, r. 659–629 BCE.
- Xi Han 西漢. Western Han dynasty, 202 BCE–9 CE.
- Xi Jin 西晉. Western Jin dynasty, 265–316 CE.
- Xi Qifeng 席奇峰. Present-day art historian, proposed a theory for the origin of tomb murals.
- Xi Shi 西市. Western Market, smallest of the two markets north of Chang’an city.
- xi sui chu zhi xian lu 昔遂初之顯祿. “In the past I fulfilled my first illustrious emolument.”
- Xi zheng fu 西征賦. “Western Expedition” *fu*, by Pan Yue.
- Xi Zhou 西周. Western Zhou, 1050–771 BCE.
- Xia Heliang 夏賀良, d. 5 BCE. Student of Gan Zhongke, condemned to death for a prophecy.
- Xia Jia 瑕嘉. Jia of Xia, fl. 590 BCE, Jin envoy featured in *Zuozhuan*.
- Xiahou Jian 夏侯建, a.k.a. Xiahou the Junior, fl. 74 BCE. Cousin of Xiahou Sheng, established his own *Documents* tradition that also was awarded a chair at the 51 BCE conference on classical scholarship.
- Xiahou Jun 夏侯君. Lord Xiahou, one of several classical scholars in the Xiahou family active in Chang’an, probably Xiahou Sheng.
- Xiahou Sheng 夏侯勝, a.k.a. Xiahou the Senior, fl. 74 BCE. Scholar of the *Documents* whose interpretation received an official chair at the 51 BCE conference on classical scholarship.
- Xiahou the Junior or Senior. See Xiahou Jian and Xiahou Sheng, respectively.
- Xi’an 西安. Xi’an.
- Xian Gong 獻公. Lord Xian of Wey, r. 576–559 BCE.
- Xi’an Men 西安門. Xi’an City Gate, westernmost of the three southern gates of Chang’an city.
- Xiang 相. Kingdom Chancellor.
- xiang 湘. River.
- “Xiang” 象. Section of the *Changes*, rendered by Wilhelm and Baynes as “Images.”
- Xiang Liang 項梁, fl. 209 BCE. Uncle of Xiang Yu, joined the revolt against Qin.

xiang xiang zhi 巷相直. Face one another across a lane.

xiangmai zhi dao 相脈之道. The way of pulse diagnosis.

Xiangshan 湘山. Mount Xiang.

Xianguan 縣官. Local representatives or envoys of the emperor, who stand in for him.

xianjing 仙境. Fairyland, lit., “realm of the immortals.”

xianlang 賢郎. Man of wisdom, sometimes rendered as *xianliang* 良.

Xianling 縣令. Magistrate.

Xianyang 咸陽. Qin capital beginning in 350 BCE.

Xiao Gong 孝公. Lord Xiao of Qin, r. 362–338 BCE.

Xiao Guan 蕭關. Xiao Pass.

Xiao He 蕭何, d. 193 BCE. Trusted minister of Gaozu who ordered the construction of the Weiyang Palace.

Xiao Li 孝里. Xiao Ward, in Chang’an city.

Xiao Wangzhi 蕭望之, ca. 107–47 BCE. Influential statesman and student of Hou Cang.

Xiao Xian 蕭咸, fl. 1 CE. Son of Xiao Wangzhi.

Xiao You 蕭由. Son of Xiao Wangzhi, served as commandery and kingdom official during Aidi’s reign.

Xiao Yu 蕭育, d. ca. 3 BCE. Son of Xiao Wangzhi who held a variety of offices under Chengdi and Aidi.

Xiaojing 孝經. *Classic of Filial Piety*.

xiaoren 小人. Inferior men.

Xiaqiu Jianggong 瑕丘江公, fl. 123 BCE. *Guliang* expert under Wudi.

Xiasi 下虢. Han settlement in Tongdi county and site of Lord Ping of Jin’s Siqi Palace/Terrace.

Xici zhuan 繫辭傳. *Appended Phrases*, section of the *Changes* classic.

Xidu fu 西都賦. “Western Metropolis” *fu*, by Ban Gu.

Xie Guang 解光, fl. 12 BCE. Colonel of Internal Security, disclosed details of how Chengdi’s two sons had been killed.

Xie Tiao 謝朓, 404–499 CE. Poet who wrote “You dongtian.”

Xie Wannian 解萬年, fl. 20–16 BCE. Court architect who, together with Chen Tang, proposed the construction of a mausoleum

for Chengdi at Changling.

Xiehe hun fu 協和婚賦. “Harmonious Marriage” *fu*, ascribed to Cai Yong.

xiepo mudao 斜坡墓道. Sloping entryway.

Xihe 羲和. Title held by Liu Xin, evoking a figure or figures (one, two, or six people) mentioned in the “Yao Dian” chapter of the *Documents*.

Xihe Jun 西河郡. Xihe Commandery, in Western Han, in the north of present-day Shanxi.

Xijing fu 西京賦. “Western Capital” *fu*, by Zhang Heng.

Xiliu 細柳. A place north of the Wei River, west of Chang’an. Hence Xiliu Cang 細柳倉 (Xiliu Granary), Xiliu Yuan 細柳原 (Slender Willow Plain).

Xin 辛. Eighth Heavenly Branch.

xin 新. New. Hence the name of the Xin dynasty with Wang Mang as emperor, 9–23 CE.

Xin Gong 信宮. Xin Palace, a Qin palace constructed south of Wei River in 220 BCE, name converted to Pole Temple in 219 BCE.

Xin Qingji 辛慶忌. Served Xuandi, Yuandi, and Chengdi; one of those who moved to Changling before registering in Chang’an.

xin shu 新書. New texts.

Xin’an Jizhuangchang 新安機磚廠. Xin’an Brick Factory.

Xindu 信都. Western Han kingdom.

Xindu Hou 新都侯. Noble of Xindu, title held by Wang Mang beginning in 16 BCE.

Xinfeng Xian 新豐縣. Xinfeng county, governed by the Jingzhao Yin, southeast of Chang’an city; present-day Lintong 臨潼.

xing gong 行宮. Traveling palace. See also *li gong*.

xing le 行樂. Enjoying oneself.

Xingle Gong 興樂宮. Xingle Palace, a Qin palace south of the Wei River, site of Changle Palace.

xinglü 行旅. Travel, category of *fu* poems in *Yiwen leiju*.

xingming 刑名. Comparing the performances of officials with their bureaucratic titles, seeing that officials kept strictly to the duties associated with their job descriptions.

Xingyang 滎陽. City in present-day Henan Province.

Xinqin 新秦. New Qin, area within the bend

- of the Yellow River that was conquered for Qin by Meng Tian.
- xinsi* 辛巳. Day 18 in the sexagenary cycle .
- xinwei* 辛未. Day 8 in the sexagenary cycle.
- Xinxu* 新序. *New Order*, text with moral and historical tales, by Liu Xiang.
- Xiongnu 匈奴. A primarily pastoral, semimadic empire centered around modern-day Mongolia and North China, engaged in frequent warfare, raiding, and trading with the Han, necessitating a foreign-policy agenda.
- “Xiongnu liezhuan” 匈奴列傳. “Biography of the Xiongnu,” chapter 110 of *Shiji*.
- Xiucheng Li 修城里. Xiucheng Ward, in Chang’an city.
- Xixiang 戲鄉. Xi district, part of Xinfeng county, where Chengdi’s Changling tomb was constructed.
- Xiyu Duhu 西域都護. Protector General of the Western Regions.
- xu* 續. To continue.
- Xu 戊. Eleventh Earthly Branch.
- xu* 序. Postface, although more often “preface” in late imperial China and modern times.
- Xu 需. “Waiting,” hexagram 5.
- Xu Bo 徐伯, fl. 130 BCE. Waterworks specialist.
- Xu Gan 徐幹, 170–217 CE. Author of *Zhong lun* 中論 *Balanced Discourses*.
- Xu Gua 序卦. One of the so-called Ten Wings (sections) of the *Yijing*.
- Xu Guang 徐廣, 353–425 CE. Eastern Jin author whose remarks on *Shiji* are included in the extant commentaries to the text.
- Xu Huanghou 許皇后. Empress Xu, d. 71 BCE, empress of Xuandi (beginning 74 BCE) and mother of Yuandi, poisoned in 71 BCE by Huo Guang’s wife; personal name Xu Pingjun 許平君.
- Xu Huanghou 許皇后. Empress Xu, d. 8 BCE, daughter of Xu Jia and empress of Chengdi 31–18 BCE; personal name Xu Kua 許誇.
- Xu Jia 許嘉, d. 28 BCE. Prominent statesman under Yuandi and representative of the Xu consort clan, father of Chengdi’s Empress Xu.
- Xu Meiren 許美人, fl. 12 BCE. Mother of a son sired by Chengdi.
- Xu Yan 徐彥, ninth to tenth century CE. Author of subcommentary to the *Gongyang*.
- Xuan Gong 宣公. Lord Xuan of Lu, r. 608–591 BCE.
- Xuan ming* 宣明. One of the six calendars examined by Liu Xin.
- Xuan Yuan 軒轅. Alternate name for the mythological Yellow Emperor.
- Xuandi 宣帝. Emperor Xuan of Western Han, r. 74–48; personal name Liu Bingyi 劉病已.
- “Xuandi [ben] ji” 宣帝紀. “Basic Annals of Xuandi’s Reign,” chapter 8 from *Hanshu*.
- Xuanming Li 宣明里. Xuanming Ward, in Chang’an city.
- Xuanping Men 宣平門. Xuanping City Gate, northernmost of three eastern gates of Chang’an city. Compare Xuanping Men Dajie 宣平門大街 (Xuanping Gate Thoroughfare).
- Xuanquan 懸泉. Site near Dunhuang where *Monthly Ordinances* were inscribed on a wall.
- xuanshi* 玄室. Grave, “hidden” or “recessed” room suitable for storing treasures, dark (meditation) chamber.
- Xuanwu 玄武. Dark Warrior, the seven northernmost lunar mansions.
- xuanxue* 玄學. Arcane learning; also Mystery Learning, related to Yang Xiong’s *Taixuan*.
- Xue Guangde 薛廣德, fl. 44 BCE. *Odes* scholar who became Imperial Counsellor.
- Xue Xuan 薛宣, d. ca. 7 BCE. Statesman whose career reached its pinnacle as Chancellor 20–15 BCE.
- Xun Yin 荀寅, fifth century BCE. Jin minister of the Zhonghang clan.
- Xun Yue 荀悅, 148–209 CE. Author of *Hanji* 漢紀 (*Records of Han*).
- Xunzi 荀子. *Master Xun*, text attributed to Xunzi, ca. 312–230 BCE.
- Xuwu 余吾/徐吾. Place name mentioned in *Zuozhuan*.
- Xuwushi 徐吾氏. A branch of the Rong(?), mentioned in *Zuozhuan* for the year 590 BCE.
- xuzi* 戊子. Day 34 in the sexagenary cycle .
- “Ya” 雅. “Elegantiae,” section of the *Odes*.
- yan* 言. Explanations.
- yan* 閭. Internal (ward) gate (according to Zhang Jihai and Miyazaki); gate leading

- into a residence (according to Zhou Changshan).
- Yan 燕. One of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 222 BCE.
- Yan Anle 顏安樂, fl. ca. 74–49 BCE. *Gongyang* specialist, student and nephew of Sui Meng.
- Yan Cen 延岑, d. 36 CE. Rebel against Wang Yang and warlord who resisted the regime of Guangwudi until his death.
- Yan Pengzu 嚴彭祖, fl. ca. 74–49 BCE. *Gongyang* specialist, a.k.a. Zhuang Pengzu (during Mingdi's reign, the name Zhuang became taboo).
- Yan Shigu 顏師古, 581–645 CE. Commentator to *Hanshu*.
- Yan Ying 晏嬰, sixth century BCE. Contemporary of Shuxiang from Qi.
- Yan You 嚴尤, d. 23 CE. Adviser and general under Wang Mang.
- yan zhi 言志. Express intent, category of *fu* poetry in *Lidai fuhui*.
- Yandi 炎帝. Fire Emperor, one of the Five Powers.
- Yang Chang 楊敞, d. 74 BCE. Imperial Counselor and Chancellor under Zhaodi, rewarded with the title and privileges of Noble of Anping; also father of Yang Yun.
- Yang Fu 楊復, fl. 1228 CE. Ritual expert.
- Yang Hou 陽侯. Lord Yang, god of the waves.
- Yang Hou 楊厚, 72–153 CE. Omenologist and teacher.
- Yang Jiu 陽九. Nine Yang, also a Han omenological theory.
- Yang Jiu Bai Liu 陽九百六. Nine (i.e., Extreme) Yang in the 106th Year.
- yang qi jiu ci 陽氣舊祠. The old cults for yang qi.
- Yang Qing 陽慶. Teacher of Chunyu Yi and a recluse.
- Yang Tan 楊譚, fl. 63–54 BCE. Son of Yang Zhong and third Noble of Anping who tried to reprimand his uncle, Yang Yun.
- Yang Xin 楊鑫. Art historian who proposed a theory to explain the origin of tomb murals.
- Yang Xing 楊興, fl. 46–20 BCE. Occupied various offices during the reigns of Yuandi and Chengdi, interpreted dust storm omen in 33 BCE.
- Yang Xiong 揚雄, 53 BCE–18 CE. Prolific writer of *fu*, author of three masterworks: *Fayan* 法言, *Taixuan (jing)* 太玄(經), and *Fangyan* 方言.
- Yang Yun 楊惲, d. 54 BCE. Maternal grandson of Sima Qian who reached ministerial office before being dismissed and executed.
- Yang Zhong 楊忠, fl. 74 BCE. Eldest son of Yang Chang, and elder brother of Yang Yun, inherited the noble title and domain of Anping.
- Yang Zhong 楊終, d. 100 CE. *Annals* expert from Eastern Han.
- Yangling 陽陵. Yangling mausoleum of Jingdi, north of Chang'an; Yangling mausoleum town 陽陵邑.
- Yangping Hou 陽平侯. Noble of Yangping, title and privileges Wang Feng inherited from his father in 42 BCE.
- Yangshe Hu 羊舌虎, d. 552 BCE. Younger brother of Shuxiang.
- Yangshe Xi 羊舌肸. See Shuxiang.
- yangyi 瘍醫. Yi of sores.
- Yanjiagou 嚴家溝. Present-day village in Xi'an area, where Yanling is situated.
- Yanling 延陵. Yanling mausoleum, of Chengdi.
- yanmei yuyan 曖昧語言. Dishonest utterances.
- Yanmen 雁門. Frontier outpost.
- Yanta 雁塔. Wild Goose Pagoda, Tang pagoda still standing in Xi'an and name of Xi'an district.
- Yantie lun 鹽鐵論. *Salt and Iron Debates*, text in debate form that resulted from a conference on the classics held in 81 BCE.
- Yanyu 閼與. Place besieged by Qin until Zhao She returned it to Zhao.
- Yao 堯. Legendary sage king of antiquity, also named Tang 唐.
- Yao 爻. Line Texts.
- yao ci 妖辭. "Ominous talk," talk that constitutes a bad omen.
- Yao Guan 嶢關. Yao Pass.
- Yao Shan 窑山. Mount Yao.
- Yaozhan 妖占. Lost work by Jing Fang the Elder.
- Ye 鄴. Capital of Wei dynasty.
- ye 業. Jobs, inheritance, and sometimes dynastic destiny.
- yearly accounts. See *ji* 計.
- Yellow Bell. See Huangzhong.
- Yellow Emperor. See Huangdi.

yeting 掖庭. Women's sleeping apartments.
Yezhe 謁者. Imperial Messenger.
yi 異. Anomaly.
yi 議. Council meeting.
yi 醫. Healer, medicine, physician.
Yi 益. Master Huntsman (a.k.a. Archer Yi) under Yao.
yi 義. Meaning.
yi 疫. Plague.
Yi 易. See *Yijing*.
yi 疑. Suspect.
Yi Feng 翼奉, fl. 48 BCE. Academician and student of Hou Cang, submitted a memorial on calendrical cycles that proposed reforms to renew the dynasty.
Yi He 醫和, ca. 546 BCE. Attendant He.
yi lei 異類. Of a different kind, or common enemy.
yi wang li zang 以王禮葬. Burials in the manner of a king.
Yi wei 易緯. *Changes Apocrypha*.
yi wei ci qu guanzhi shixian yintui de benyuan 意調辭去官職實現隱退的本願. Resign from office, to fulfill one's true desire to withdraw into reclusion.
yi wu wei you 以無為有. Take absence to be proof of presence.
Yi xiong ci mi li 易雄雌祕歷. *Secret Calendar for Polar Oppositions in the Changes*.
Yi Yin 伊尹. Chief adviser to Tang of Yin.
yi zhi dao 醫之道. Way of the *yi*.
yi zhou 一周. One turn, one cycle of 360 years.
Yibo zhi miao 夷伯之廟. Temple of Yibo.
yidao 醫道. Way of the *yi*.
yijia zhi yan 一家之言. "One expert's sayings," that is, a text reflecting one line of thought.
Yijing 易經. *Changes* classic, one of the Five Classics.
yijing 醫經. Medical classics or corpus.
Yili 逸禮. *Missing Rituals*.
Yili 儀禮. *Ritual Ceremonies*, one of the three ritual classics.
Yin 殷. Alternative name for Shang.
yin 禋. Burnt offering.
Yin 寅. Third Earthly Branch.
Yin 寅. Thirteenth month.
Yin 陰. Western Han county.
Yin Feng 陰豐. See Ling Feng.
yin si 淫. Illicit cults.

Yin Xian 尹咸, fl. 26 BCE–5 CE. Taishi Ling who worked under Liu Xiang on the technical texts for the imperial library and its catalogue; argued in 5 CE in favor of restoring Altars to Heaven and Earth at Chang'an.
Yin yang dalun 陰陽大論. *Great Disquisitions of the Yin and Yang*.
Ying Shao 應劭, d. ca. 203. Distinguished scholar, author of *Fengsu tongyi*.
Ying Zheng 嬴政. See Qin Shihuang.
Yingchuan Jun 潁川郡. Yingchuan Commandery, south of the Yellow River below Henan Commandery.
Yinghuo 熒惑. The Glittering Deluder, planet Mars.
Yingshi 營室. Royal Chamber, name of star.
Yinshu 引書. *Pulling Book*, from Mawangdui, provides directions for therapeutic stretches and breathing exercises.
Yinwan 尹灣. Archaeological site in Jiangsu Province where important administrative documents were discovered in M6 (sealed ca. 10 BCE).
yiqian 以前. Previously, before.
Yishi 醫史. *History of Medicine*, sixteenth century CE.
yishi 醫師. Master/teacher of *yi*.
Yishuo 醫說. *Sayings about Healers*, dated 1189 CE.
Yiwen leiju 藝文類聚. *Anthology of Literary Excerpts arranged by Categories*, 624 CE.
 "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志. "Bibliographical Treatise," chapter 30 of *Hanshu*.
yiya 醫藥. Medicaments.
Yong 雍. Capital of Qin 677–423 BCE; sacrificial site during Qin and Western Han, 143 kilometers west of Chang'an (ancient travel distance, 158 km).
Yong Bo 雍伯, fl. second century BCE. Wealthy merchant.
Yong Sheng 庸生. Master Yong, fl. first century BCE, Academician in the *Guliang* tradition with command of the *Zuozhuan* and the *Analects*.
yongdao 甬道. Corridor, road between high palisades or palace walls.
Yonglu 雍錄. *Record of Yong*, by Cheng Dachang 程大昌 (1123–1195 CE).
Yongshi 永始. Reign period, 16–13 BCE.

- you* 郵. Postal or courier system.
- You 酉. Tenth Earthly Branch.
- You cheng nanji* 遊城南記. *Travel Diary of South of the City*, ca. 1094 CE, by Zhang Li.
- “You dongtian” 游東田. “Wandering to the Eastern Fields,” by Xie Tiao.
- You Jiangjun 右將軍. General of the Right.
- You Neishi 右內史. Metropolitan Commissioner of the Right; after 104 BCE this title was changed to Youfufeng.
- you qian wen zhi xuan zhi* 攸潛溫之玄室. (I) dwell in a dark chamber, secluded and warm.
- You Wang 幽王. King You of Western Zhou, r. 781–771 BCE.
- Youfufeng 右扶風. Metropolitan Commissioner of the Right and the area he supervised.
- Yu 禹. Legendary ruler of antiquity who succeeded Shun and founded the Xia 夏 dynasty; Imperial Counsellor under Yao.
- Yu Dingguo 于定國, d. ca. 40 BCE. High-ranking official during the reigns of Xuandi and Yuandi; as Commissioner of Trials he was in charge of the persecution of Yang Yun in 56 BCE.
- Yu Qing 虞卿, fl. 265–245 BCE. Chancellor of Zhao and putative author of *Mr. Yu's Annals*.
- yu ru* 愚儒. Idiotic antiquarian.
- yu tai* 玉體. Precious body.
- Yu Weichao 俞偉超, 1933–2003 CE. Beijing archaeologist.
- yu xiang zhi* 宇相直. To be directly opposite one another within a space.
- yuan* 完. Encircling wall.
- yuan* 園. Fields, gardens, orchards.
- yuan* 蜃. Locust larvae.
- Yuan 元. Origin, that is, the base year for calendrical computations (the Triple Concordance calendrical system has a cycle of 4,617 years).
- Yuan 沅. Yuan River.
- Yuan Ang 袁盎, d. 150 BCE. Adviser at the courts of Wendi and Jingdi, murdered by order of King Xiao of Liang.
- Yuan Guanghan 袁廣漢. Rich man from Mao-ling with large estate.
- Yuan She 原涉, d. 23 CE. Governor's son who became a powerful local leader with a large following, based in the Chang'an area.
- yuan shi* 援史. Staff members.
- Yuandi 元帝 Emperor Yuan of Western Han, r. 48–33 BCE; personal name Liu Shi 劉奭.
- Yuanshi 元始. Reign period, 1–5 CE.
- Yuanshi Yi 元始儀. Yuanshi Ceremonies, name given by scholars to the sacrificial system instituted under Pingdi in 5 CE (year 5 of the Yuanshi reign period).
- Yuanyan 元延. Reign period, 12–9 BCE.
- Yudi 虞帝. Alternate name for the mythological emperor Shun.
- Yue 越. Southeastern kingdom that experienced dramatic surge of power ca. 470 BCE, at the end of the Chunqiu period.
- Yue ling* 月令. *Monthly Ordinances*.
- “Yue shu” 樂書. “Treatise on Music,” chapter 24 of *Shiji*.
- yue you yiguan* 月游衣冠. Monthly parade of robes and caps.
- Yuewang Fu 樂王鮒, fl. 552 BCE. Man of Jin whose offer of help Shuxiang refused.
- “Yuexia duzhuo” 月下獨酌. “Under the Moon, Drinking Alone,” by Li Bo.
- Yuezheng 樂正. Music Master, title of legendary Kui at Yao's court.
- Yufu 俞跗. Ancient physician.
- Yuhua wuji* 與華無極 and *Yuhua xiangyi* 與華相宜. Roof tile end inscriptions on site of Hua Granary.
- yun qi* 運期. Cycle periods.
- Yuntai 雲臺. Cloud Terrace, location in Eastern Han imperial palace.
- Yunyang 雲陽. Location of Sweet Springs ritual site and present-day county.
- Yunyang Gong 雲陽宮. Yunyang Palace, the location where Zhao Jieyu died, tentatively identified as the Ganquan Palace of Qin times.
- Yunzhong 雲中. Frontier outpost.
- Yushi chunqiu* 虞氏春秋. *Mr. Yu's Annals*.
- Yushi Dafu 御史大夫. Imperial Counsellor. See also Da Sikong.
- Yuyang Gong 羽陽宮. Yuyang Palace.
- zai* 災. Catastrophe. Compare *zaiyi* 災異 (catastrophes and anomalies, natural disasters and anomalies).
- zaiheng* 宰衡. Title given to Wang Mang in

- 4 CE, a combination of titles supposedly held by Zhougong (Taizai 太宰) and Yi Yin (Eheng 阿衡).
- Zao He 皂河. Zao River, important tributary of the Jue River.
- zao *Wuwang zhi guayun* 遭无妄之卦運. Confronting the Hexagram Cycle “No Hope.”
- zaoxian 早先. Previously, before.
- zhai 宅. Housing units, residential plots.
- Zhai Fangjin 翟方進, d. 7 BCE. Statesman who, together with He Wu, instituted the 8 BCE institutional reforms while he served as Chancellor from 15 to 7 BCE.
- zhang 璋. Ritual jade.
- Zhang 章. Rule, period of nineteen years.
- zhang 丈. Unit of length (231 cm).
- Zhang Anshi 張安世, d. 62 BCE. Son of Zhang Tang who served the courts of Wudi, Zhaodi, and Xuandi in increasingly influential positions and succeeded Huo Guang as Marshal of State; his family cemetery is being excavated and studied as this book goes to press.
- Zhang Binglin 章炳麟, 1868–1936 CE. Annotator of *Zuozhuan*.
- Zhang Chang 張敞, fl. 74–48 BCE. Official at Xuandi’s court, dismissed at the fall of Yang Yun.
- “Zhang Chengxiang liezhuan” 張丞相列傳. “Biography of Chancellor Zhang,” chapter 96 of *Shiji*.
- Zhang Fang 張放, d. 7 BCE. Son of Zhang Anshi and male lover of Chengdi.
- Zhang Heng 張衡, 78–139 CE. Author of *Xijing fu*, famous mathematician, astronomer, statesman.
- Zhang Kuang 張匡, fl. 28–25 BCE. Attacked Wang Shang in 25 BCE on behalf of Wang Feng.
- Zhang Li 張禮, fl. eleventh century CE. Author of *You cheng nanji*.
- Zhang Qian 張騫, d. 113 BCE. Famous envoy to the Western Regions, whose missions sparked the foreign expansionism of Wudi’s era.
- Zhang Qiao 章樵, fl. 1208 CE. Added poems and commentary to the twenty-one-juan edition of *Guwen yuan*.
- Zhang Shizhi 張釋之, fl. 160 BCE. Adviser to Wendi and Jingdi.
- Zhang Shoujie 張守節, fl. 737 CE. Author of *Shiji zhengyi*.
- Zhang Shui 漳水. Zhang River.
- Zhang Tai 章臺. Zhang Terrace, a Qin palace south of the Wei River.
- Zhang Tan 張譚, fl. 40–30 BCE. Imperial Counsellor who supported Kuang Heng’s reforms, also Tutor to Chengdi when the latter was Heir Apparent.
- Zhang Tang 張湯, fl. 130–117 BCE. Served as Commissioner of Trials and Imperial Counsellor.
- Zhang Xuan 張玄, fl. 25 CE. *Gongyang* scholar and (briefly) Academician.
- Zhang Yan 張晏, fl. third century CE. Author often quoted in Tang commentaries to *Shiji* and *Hanshu*.
- Zhang Yanshou 張延壽, fl. 62–54 BCE. Statesman and son of Zhang Anshi, related to Yang Yun by marriage.
- Zhang Yu 張禹, d. 5 BCE. Classical scholar who, having served as Chengdi’s Tutor, became a trusted figure to that emperor.
- Zhang Zhongjing 張仲景, a.k.a. Zhang Ji 張機, ca. 150–219 CE. Medical author.
- Zhangdi 章帝. Emperor Zhang of Eastern Han, r. 75–88 CE; personal name Liu Da 劉烜.
- Zhanggu 掌古. Authority on Precedents. Title of an office in the central government.
- Zhangjiashan 張家山. Archaeological site in Hubei where important legal, administrative, and medical texts were found in M247 (sealed in 186 BCE).
- zhangju 章句. Chapter and verse.
- Zhangshi 長史. Senior Officers.
- Zhanguo 戰國. Warring States period, 475–222 BCE.
- Zhanguoce 戰國策. *Stratagems of the Warring States*.
- Zhangye Jun 張掖郡. Zhangye Commandery, in Western Han, in the northwest.
- Zhao 昭. Family of Chu that was relocated to Chang’an in early Western Han.
- Zhao 趙. A rival clan in Jin, fifth century BCE; subsequently, one of the Six Kingdoms, conquered by Qin in 222 BCE.
- Zhao Chongguo 趙充國, ca. 137–52 BCE. General and foreign policy maker who favored the establishment of military colonies.

- Zhao Feiyan 趙飛燕. “Flying Swallow” Zhao, d. 1 BCE, rose from dancing girl to become Chengdi’s empress.
- Zhao Gao 趙高, d. 207 BCE. Chancellor to the Second Emperor of Qin who manipulated the succession in Qin.
- Zhao Guanghan 趙廣漢, d. ca. 65 BCE. Successful commandery Governor and Governor of the Capital who antagonized several high-ranking figures and was executed.
- Zhao Ji 趙稷, fifth century BCE. Son of Zhao Wu.
- Zhao Jianzi 趙簡子. See Zhao Yang.
- Zhao Jieyu 趙婕妤. Lady Zhao, a.k.a. Gouyi Jieyu, fl. 94–87 BCE, mother of Zhaodi and rumored to have been murdered by Wudi.
- Zhao Lin 趙臨. Father of Zhao Feiyan and Noble of Chengyang.
- Zhao She 趙舍, fl. 270 BCE. Zhao general.
- Zhao Wu 趙武, fifth century BCE. Minister in Handan.
- Zhao Yang 趙鞅, fifth century BCE. Viscount Jian of Zhao.
- Zhao Zhaoyi 趙昭儀. Consort Zhao, fl. 18–1 BCE, sister of Zhao Feiyan and herself a favorite of Chengdi. See also Zhaoyi.
- Zhaodi 昭帝. Emperor Zhao of Western Han, r. 87–74 BCE; personal name Liu Fuling 劉弗陵.
- Zhaoge 朝歌. Place in Henan mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*.
- “Zhaohun” 招魂. “Summoning the Soul,” section of *Chuci*.
- Zhaomu 昭穆. Ritual system that stipulates the alternation of generations in the placement of tombs, shrines, and funerary tablets; possibly in place by late Western Han, not in place under Eastern Han.
- Zhaoxiang Wang 昭襄王. King Zhaoxiang of Qin, r. 307–251 BCE.
- Zhaoyang Dian 昭陽殿. Zhaoyang Audience Hall.
- Zhaoyi 昭儀. Title for a favored consort of high status established by Yuandi.
- zhen 真. Fully, prefix that indicates the highest grade within the stipulated salary level.
- zhendao 針道. Acupuncture.
- zhenfa 針法. Acupuncture.
- Zheng Dangshi 鄭當時, fl. 154–119 BCE. As Metropolitan Commissioner of the Right (You Neishi), he proposed, in 132 BCE, the building of a canal from Chang’an to Huayin.
- zheng gong 正宮. Palace proper.
- Zheng Guo Qu 鄭國渠. Zheng Guo Canal.
- Zheng Shu 徵舒, fl. 597 BCE. Committed regicide.
- Zheng Xuan 鄭玄, 127–200 CE. Classical exegete and author of *Breaking through the Mohist Defense*.
- Zheng Yan 鄭岩. Present-day art historian.
- Zhending 真定. Western Han Kingdom.
- Zhenghe 征和. Reign period, 92–89 BCE.
- zhengmen 正門. Official ward gate.
- Zhengwangcun 鄭王村. Site of cemetery with Western Han tombs.
- zhengyue 正月. First month.
- Zhenjing 針經. *Needle Classic*.
- Zhenjiu jiaiyijing 針灸甲乙經. *ABCs of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, compiled ca. 256–260 CE by Huangfu Mi.
- zhi 志. Ambitions, commitments.
- zhi 置. Postal or courier system.
- Zhi 知. A powerful clan in fifth century BCE Jin.
- zhi 質. Substantial.
- zhi 治. To treat.
- “Zhi lü” 秩律. “Statute on Salary Rank,” one of twenty-seven statutes (*lü*) excavated from M247 at Zhangjiashan.
- zhi ye luo 枝葉落. Branches and leaves were falling.
- zhibing gong 治病工. Trained men skilled in remedying ailments.
- zhichan 治產. Managing money-making ventures.
- Zhidao 直道. Straight Road, road to the north constructed in 212 BCE.
- zhijia 質家. Proponents for “substance,” featured in *Bohu tong*.
- Zhiyang 芷陽. A Qin cult site.
- Zhizhi 郅支, d. 36 BCE. Xiongnu leader (Chanyu) killed when Gan Zhongke and Chen Tang undertook military action against him.
- zhizhizang 直肢葬. Straight burial, corpse buried with straight limbs.
- Zhizong 秩宗. Director of Ceremonial, title of Boyi in time of Yao.
- zhong 中. Centralization, also palace; prefix that

- indicates second-highest grade within the stipulated salary level.
- zhong* 終. Eventually.
- zhong* 鍾/鐘. Great measure, unit to measure capacity; in pre-imperial times about 200 liters.
- zhong* 仲. Second.
- Zhong Huang Men 中黃門. Attendants at the Yellow Gates, designation for eunuchs.
- Zhong Ni 仲尼. Courtesy name/sobriquet of Kongzi.
- Zhong Wenzhen 鍾文烝, 1818–1877 CE. Partisan of the *Guliang*.
- Zhongguo 中國. Central States, states in the North China Plain allied with the Zhou kingly house, usually through heredity or marriage.
- Zhonghang 中行. A clan in fifth century BCE Jin.
- Zhonglang Jiang 中郎將. Leader of the Courtiers of the Palace, Leader of the Palace Guards (Kroll's reading).
- Zhonglei Xiaowei 中壘校尉. Colonel of the Central Ramparts.
- Zhongli Sheng 鍾離生 Master Zhongli, named as informant by Master Chu.
- zhongmen* 中門. Middle gate.
- Zhongnan Shan 終南山. Zhongnan Mountains, also called Nanshan.
- Zhongqiu 重丘. Small city-state mentioned in *Zuozhuan*.
- Zhongshan 中山. Western Han kingdom.
- Zhongshu 中書. Palace Writers.
- Zhongshu Ling 中書令. Director of the Palace Writers.
- Zhongwei 中尉. Commissioner of the Capital, Commandant; official in the Western Han kingdoms responsible for public safety.
- Zhongwen 仲文. Exemplary figure from antiquity.
- Zhongyuan 中原. Central Plain.
- zhongzheng* 中正. Fair and proper.
- Zhou 周. Dynasty that conquered Shang ca. 1050 BCE, conquered by Qin in 256 BCE, divided into Western Zhou (1050–771 BCE) and Eastern Zhou (771–221 BCE).
- Zhou Bo 周勃, d. 169 BCE. Comrade-in-arms of Gaozu who played a major part in removing the Lü family from power in 180 BCE, became Chancellor under Wendi.
- Zhou Kan 周堪, d. ca. 43 BCE. Classically trained scholar and official much liked by Yuandi.
- Zhou Shouchang 周壽昌, 1814–1884 CE. Qing-dynasty scholar.
- Zhou tripods. See *Zhou zhi jiu ding*.
- Zhou zhi jiu ding* 周之九鼎. Zhou tripods.
- Zhou Zi Nan Jun 周子南君. Title accorded to a descendant of the royal family of Zhou.
- Zhougong 周公. Duke of Zhou, uncle of King Cheng who acted as his regent before duly surrendering power.
- Zhouguan* 周官. *Offices of Zhou*, alternative title for *Rituals of Zhou*.
- Zhouli* 周禮. *Rituals of Zhou*, one of the three ritual classics.
- Zhouling Zhen 周陵鎮. Zhouling town, present-day town where Yanling is situated.
- Zhoumu 州牧. Provincial Shepherds, title for *Cishi* in vogue 8–6 BCE and 6 BCE–42 CE.
- Zhu Bo 朱博, d. 5 BCE. Opponent of He Wu who, just before his disgrace and suicide in 5 BCE, briefly served as Chancellor.
- zhu dao* 主道. The way of the ruler.
- Zhu Gong 竹宮. “Bamboo Palace,” at Sweet Springs.
- zhuan du* 傳讀. Reciting it out loud.
- Zhuan Xu 顓頊. Legendary ruler of antiquity in the third millennium BCE.
- zhuan zhong cheng* 傳中稱. In the biography it is claimed.
- Zhuang Pengzu 莊彭祖. See Yan Pengzu.
- Zhuangzi* 莊子. *Master Zhuang*, text attributed to Zhuang Zhou 莊周 (late fourth century BCE).
- Zhufu Yan 主父偃, fl. 126 BCE. Rhetorician and adviser at Wudi's court.
- zhuhou* 諸侯. All the nobles, including nobles with the title of king (*zhuhouwang* 諸侯王); joint designation for members of the Liu imperial family who headed a hereditary kingdom.
- zhui xue zhi shi* 綴學之士. Men of good breeding who compile texts from preexisting units.
- zhuiwen* 綴文. Compiling texts from preexisting units.
- Zhuli 諸吏. Inspector of Officials.

Zhuo Jun 涿郡. Zhuo Commandery, in Western Han, in present-day Hebei.

Zhu Xia 諸夏. Term that designates the culture and kingdoms emblematic of the Central States. See also Zhongguo.

zhuwen 屬文. Putting together related passages.

zhuzhai 住宅. Residential unit.

Zi 子. Eleventh month.

Zi Gong 紫宮. “Purple Palace,” constellation that represented the imperial palace.

Zi Xia 子夏. Disciple of Confucius.

Zichan 子產. Exemplary minister portrayed in *Zuo zhuan*.

Zichuan 菑川. Western Han Kingdom.

Zigong 子貢. Disciple of Kongzi.

Zijun 子駿. Alternative personal name for Liu Xiang.

zither. See *qin*; *se*.

Ziwu Gukou 子午谷口. Ziwu Valley Mouth.

Ziyong 子幼. Yang Yun’s polite name.

Zizheng 子政. Alternative personal name for Liu Xiang.

Zong Gong Tianji xing qi yi ming zhe Taiyi chang ju ye 中宮天極星,其一明者,太一常居也. “In the Central Palace the Heavenly Polestar is the brightest; it is the permanent residence of the Grand Unity.”

Zongheng 從橫. Vertical and Horizontal Alliances, refers to alliances with or against pre-unification Qin but more generally to the Realpolitik of the Zhanguo period.

Zongzheng 宗正. Commissioner of the Imperial Clan.

zongzu guannian yiban bu nonghou 整個社會中宗族觀念不濃厚. Clan consciousness was not deep.

Zou 鄒. Commentarial tradition to the *Annals* about which little is known, also a county that formed part of the kingdom of Lu during Wudi’s reign.

zou 騶. Groom.

zou 奏. Memorial.

Zou Lu da ru 鄒魯大儒. Great classicist from Zou and Lu.

Zou Yan 鄒衍, 305–ca. 240 BCE. Regarded as the theorist behind the Five Powers cycle.

zu 卒. Conscript servicemen.

zu shu qi shu 祖述其書. “Transmitting this book as his grandfather’s work”; alterna-

tively, “treated Sima Qian as his ancestor and transmitted his writings.”

zun 樽. Goblet.

zun 樽. Wine or water vessel.

zuo 作. Author, make.

Zuo 左. Traditions associated with the *Annals*. See Zuo Qiuming; *Zuo zhuan*.

Zuo Cao 左曹. Bureau Head of the Left.

Zuo Jiangjun 左將軍. General of the Left, Left General.

Zuo Qiuming 左丘明, fl. fifth century BCE. Putative author of the *Zuo zhuan*.

Zuo Xian 左咸, fl. 7 BCE–11 CE. Student of Ling Feng.

Zuopingyi 左馮翊. Metropolitan Commissioner of the Left and the area he supervised.

Zuo zhuan 左傳. *Zuo Tradition(s)*.

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- Clauss-Slaby: Epigraphische Datenbank Clauss-Slaby. www.manfredclaus.de.
- ECT: Loewe, Michael, ed. *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*. Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1993.
- e-SKQS: Electronic database based on the printed Wenyuange edition of *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong and Digital Heritage Publishing, 1999–.
- LTUR: Steinby, Eva M., ed. *Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae*. 6 vols. Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 1993–2000.
- Shuihudi: *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹簡. Ed. Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 睡虎地秦墓竹簡整理小組. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1990. Reprint 2002.

PRIMARY SOURCES (PRE-QING AND QING)

Additional versions of some of the texts in this section may be found under “Modern Editions of and Commentaries to Primary Sources.”

- Baibu congshu jicheng* 百部叢書集成. Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1967.
- Baihu tong* 白虎通. See *Bohu tong*.
- Baopuzi* 抱朴子. Comp. Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343 CE). 70 *juan*. See Wang Ming.
- Bielu* 別錄. Comp. Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE). 20 *juan*. See Deng Junjie.
- Bo Wujing yiyi* 駁五經異義. Comp. Zheng Xuan (127–200 CE). See *Bo Wujing yiyi shuzheng*.
- Bo Wujing yiyi shuzheng* 駁五經異義疏證. Comp. Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908 CE). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002.
- Bohu tong* 白虎通. Comp. Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE). 12 *juan*. See Chen Li.
- Cai Zhonglang ji* 蔡中郎集. Comp. Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192 CE). 6 *juan*. In *Sibu beiyao*.
- Chang'an zhi [tu]* 長安志[圖]. Comp. Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019–1079 CE). 20 + 3 *juan*. Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1969.
- Chōshū isho shūsei*. See Yasui and Nakamura.
- Chuci* 楚辭. See *Chuci jizhu*; *Chuci buzhu*; and Hawkes.
- Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注. Comp. Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1070–1135 CE), punctuated and collated by Bai Huawen 白化文 et al. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983.
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- Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露. Attributed to Dong Zhongshu (ca. 198–107 BCE). 17 *juan*. See Su Yu.
- Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu* 春秋公羊傳注疏. Comm. He Xiu 何休 (129–182 CE), subcomm. Xu Yan 徐彥 (Tang). In *Shisanjing zhushu*.

- Chunqiu Guliangzhuan* 春秋穀梁傳. See *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan zhushu*; and *Chunqiu Guliangzhuan bu zhu*.
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INDEX

A

Academicians: dormitories for, 186, 198n35; posts for, 379, 384, 387–88n91, 389n117, 471; mentioned, 333, 337, 357; Liu Xin's letter regarding, 374, 377, 380–384, 392, 472

accompanying burials (*peizang mu*), 33, 132, 148n8, 149n32; at Yanling, 203*map*. *See also* conferred burials (*ci zang*)

Accumulated Calculations Method (Ji Suan Fa), 310

administrative units, terminology for, 10, 15–16

Advisory Counsellor (Jian Dafu), 238n78, 258n20, 259n31, 260n49, 358

agricultural colonies (*tun tian*), 168

agriculture, 117–18, 127n89, 213–14, 232

Ai, King of Zhongshan (Liu Jing), 142, 365n51

Aidi (7–1 BCE): grandmother of, 74n48; as heir apparent, 261n50, 346n87, 355, 359–360; imperial sacrifices under, 277; as King of Dingtao, 355, 365n61; and Liu Xin's letter, 380, 383; mother of, 363n8; omen reports under, 324, 340, 342, 469; reign of, and calendrical cycles, 309; rescinded and reinstated reforms, 235n28, 258n24, 260n48, 261n51; tomb of, 149n37, 202, 208, 214n3, 215n4, 362n8; Wang Mang and, 71; weakness of, 234

alchemy, 371

Alexander the Great, 91

Alexandria, 3, 14, 35, 50n123, 457

Altars to Soil and Grain, 67–69, 73n39, 79n46. *See also* sacrifices; suburban sacrifices

amnesties, 40, 51n145, 202, 204

Amphitheatrum Flavium (Colosseum), 80, 89

An City Gate, 62, 64

Analects (*Lunyu*), 301, 337, 361, 400, 405–6, 424, 469, 472

ancestral shrines: centered at the capital, 15, 45n57, 269–70, 280; relocation of, under Wang Meng, 67–69; sites for, under Chengdi and Pingdi, 73n39. *See also* imperial cults; sacrifices

Andi (r. 106–125 CE), 200n62

Anding Commandery, 426

animals: combat scene depicted in rubbing, 7*fig.*; depicted in mural tombs, 135, 145; draft animals, 118, 119–20, 129n106; as grave goods, 156*fig.*; hunting scenes, 140, 145. *See also* Four Directional Animals; horses

Annals (*Chunqiu*): Academicians' posts for, 379, 384, 387–88n91, 389n117, 471; apocryphal texts affiliated with, 295, 472, 476n68; cited in legal cases, 353, 465; commentaries to, 461–62, 464–65, 470–72, 473–74n3, 474n9; and factional disputes, 462, 473; and the interpretation of omens, 466–68, 469–70; interpretive methods for, 367, 468–69; praise and blame in, 402, 462; traditions on disasters and anomalies, 296, 299; twelve ducal reigns, 294. *See also* *Gongyang* commentarial tradition; *Guliang* commentarial tradition; *Zuozhuan*

Ao Granary, 62, 110, 125–26n65

apocryphal texts, 295, 316nn10–11, 471, 472, 476n68

Appended Phrases (*Xici zhuan*), 376, 386n65

Aqua Traiana, 45n48

aqueducts: “flying canals,” 102, 103; Roman, 23, 45n48, 48n90; usage in Rome, 37*chart*

Arbuckle, Gary, 484

archaeology in the People's Republic of China, 45n55. *See also* excavations

Archaic Script (Guwen): reformers affiliated with, 288n88; texts in, 378, 380, 382, 383, 388n99, 450, 451; version of *Documents*, 380, 382, 391; version of *Zuozhuan*, 378, 380, 387n82, 388n99

architecture: built environment of Chang'an, 21; monumental, 6–7, 43n24; palace, in Rome and early imperial China, 30*fig.*; use of timber and tamped earth, 47n74; and visions of imperial power, 108, 509. *See also* Chang'an

archives, 6, 26, 78, 367, 395; contrasted with libraries, 507, 515n10. *See also* manuscripts, depositories of

army, 11–12, 17, 35, 87, 172n46, 450; rescue of the king's army cited in Liu Xin's letter, 397, 407
 Armory. *See* Arsenal
 Arsenal: construction of, 72n21; feature of Chang'an paralleled in Rome, 76, 85, 86; location between Changle and Weiyang palaces, 24, 61; plan of, 95n35; weapon storage at, 84, 95n35
 artisans, 10, 144–45, 150n55. *See also* painters
 Assmann, Jan, 41n2
 Augustus (r. 27 BCE–14 CE), 33–35, 76, 82, 88–89, 93, 96n52
 Aurelian Wall, 94n19
 authorship, 449, 459n41
 avenues, 76; described in “Western Metropolis” *fu*, 176

B

- Ba Cheng Gate, remains of perimeter walls at, 24*fig.*
 Ba Commandery, 109
 Ba River, 100, 121n7, 122n11
 Bailuyuan, brick tomb with sloping entryway, 160*fig.*
 Baker, Timothy, 48n83
 Baling: accompanying burial at, 132, 148n8; mentioned, 47n76, 204, 206, 209; mural fragments from, 132–33, 144, 148n8; as name of tomb and county, 202; spared looting, 150n42; in “Western Metropolis” *fu*, 177
 bamboo, 47n74
 Ban, Lady (Ban Jieyu): denunciation of, 209–10; removal as empress, 6, 42n16, 223; support of Grand Empress Dowager Wang, 210, 216–17n47; talent of, 226, 234n26
 Ban Biao: *Bei Zheng fu* (“Northern Journey” *fu*), 392–93; on Chengdi, 222–23, 235n24; mentioned, 207, 436n69; on reforms of the imperial cults, 280–81; version of *Bielu*, 496; view of Yang Yun's execution, 421–22; “Wangming lun” (“On the Mandate of Kings”), 227
 Ban consort family: bad blood with Zhao consort family, 42n16; interest in Changlin, 210; mentioned, 224; treatment of Chengdi's reign, 6, 40, 42n16. *See also* Ban, Lady; Ban Biao; Ban Gu
 Ban Gu: appraisal of Sima Qian, 495, 504n123; bias of, 42n16, 508; on Chengdi, 226, 235n24; and claim of Han house's Yao lineage, 226; dating of events by, 420–21, 436n69; *Dianyin*, 496; and Feng Shang, 496, 504n135; on the Huo family, 259n30; and later models for explaining omens, 342; on Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, 379; mentioned, 386n63, 433n13, 483, 498n8, 499n21; on missing chapters of *Shiji*, 480; motives for *Hanshu* chapters, 223; on palace construction, 60; and the prediction “every 500 years will see a true king arise,” 316n8; on ritual, 285n10; speaks of one thousand internal gates, 176, 180, 187, 188; view of Chu Shaosun, 495; view of omens and Wang Mang, 340, 341, 346n90, 346n91; view of Yang Yun's execution, 421–22, 428; “Western Metropolis” *fu*, 27, 72n22, 175–76, 176–77, 180, 194. *See also* *Hanshu*
 Ban Jieyu. *See* Ban, Lady
 Ban Kuang, 50n121, 207
 Ban Zhao, 433n13
 bandits, suppression of, 42n15
 banquets, 121n9, 354; portrayed in murals, 138*fig.*, 140, 513; Roman, 93n8
bao bian (praise and blame), 402, 462
 Bao River, 106
 Bao Si, 235n23
 Bao Xian, 406
 Bao-Xie Road, 106, 124n49
 Bao-Xie Transport Canal, 104–6, 105*map*, 109–10, 122n12, 124nn48,49,51
 Baoshan, wooden tablets from Chu tomb, 512*fig.*
 Baotou (Inner Mongolia), 147n2
Baoyuan taiping jing, 387n79
 Barbieri-Low, Anthony, 45n52; plan of Han Chang'an, 77*fig.*
 Bashang, 72n24
 baths: public, 8, 43n29; Roman, 89, 90*fig.*
 Beidi, migration to, 213
 Beijing, central axis of, 64, 73n29
 Beikangcun: catacomb tombs, 160*fig.*; green-glazed ceramics from, 161*fig.*
 bells and chimes, 155
 Bi Li, 339–40, 346n85
 Bi Yuan, 149n33, 211; stele by, at Yanling, 202*fig.*
 Bian Dian (Chamber of Ease), 206, 216n24
 Bian Que: account of, in the *Zhanguo*ce, 451; biography of, 443–45, 449; diagnosis of Lord Huan, 457–58n13, 459n40; as part of medical history, 446–47, 454, 456; shown as half bird, half human, 443*fig.*
 Biao Pond, 100, 103, 123nn24,25
 Bielenstein, Hans: on Chengdi's bureaucratic reforms, 257nn12,13; model for explaining

omens, 323–24, 326, 342, 342n6, 346n90; rendering of Han titles, xi, 433n14

Bing Gao, 386n51

Bing Ji, 142, 149n33, 386n51

Biyong (Circular Moat), 47n80, 68, 73n40, 364n39, 378, 382, 389n119

black dragon sighting, 331, 334–35, 345n59

Bo Yu (Xia), 386n65

body conception, 512, 517n42

Bohu tong (*Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall*), 45n57, 74n52, 199n47, 230

books, ownership of, 381

bricks: pictorial, 119fig., 146, 162, 171n28, 173n55; used in tomb construction, 135, 148n11, 159, 160fig., 162, 168, 169, 171n28, 173n55, 509; Xin'an Brick Factory, 155, 171n15. *See also* pictorial stones

bridges, 116, 121n7, 124n44

bronze vessels, 154, 157; Qin and early Western Han compared, 157fig.

Bu Qianqiu, tomb of, 151n62, 173n55

Buddhism, 507

building materials, 17, 47n74, 78, 153

Bujard, Marianne, 264, 284, 285n9, 291n131

bureaucracy (Roman), 44n34. *See also* official bureaucracy

burial culture: changes in, from Qin, 153, 156fig., 158; commoners and low-level officials, 162; convict and corvée laborers, 514–15n4; Early Western Han, 157; Eastern Han, 168–69, 173n56, 173n60; influence of Six Kingdoms, 155, 157, 158, 159, 162; in Luoyang, 162; nonelite, 162, 165; orientation of the corpse, 154, 155, 160; outside the control of the Western Han court, 172n34; Qin, 154, 156, 170n7; small and midsized tombs, 155, 162; standardization of, 166–77; tomb layout, 159, 509; tomb structure, 154. *See also* burials; cemeteries; Core Han Culture; grave goods; mural tombs; tombs

burials: adjacent and conjoint, 170n1; of high officials, 43n20; of husband and wife together, 153, 170n1, 509; lavishness of, 5, 41n11, 208, 372; sumptuary regulations relating to, 5, 145, 147, 150n57, 151n58, 164–65. *See also* burial culture; cemeteries; mural tombs; tombs

Byzantium, 3

C

Caelian Hill, 79

Caesar Augustus, 33–35, 76, 82, 88–89, 93, 96n52

Cai Yong, “Harmonious Marriage” *fu* (*Xiehe hun fu*), 393

calendrical computations (*li shu*): and calendar systems, 316n9; cited by Gongsun Shu, 315n4; conjunctions theories from the *Odes* Traditions, 302–6, 314–15, 320n67; Hexagram Cycle theory, 306–11; and the Mandate of Heaven, 294, 295, 304–6, 315, 319n66, 320n73; and names of reign periods, 315; Nine Yang theory, 312–14; and the prediction “every 500 years will see a true king arise,” 295; pre-Qin, 293, 314; Triple Concordance system, 311, 316n9. *See also* calendrical cycles

calendrical cycles (*li yun*), 293, 295–96, 302–6, 314–15, 319n62, 319n66. *See also* calendrical computations

Campus Martius, 81, 82, 86, 89; as Roman counterpart of Shanglin Park, 85–86, 96n43

canals, 103–5, 110, 122nn12,20, 123nn33,40, 123–24n41, 124n43, 125–26n65; “flying,” 102, 103; White Canal, 104, 123n36, 123n38; Zheng Guo Canal, 103, 104, 122n10, 123nn29,38. *See also* Transport Canal

cang (vessel), 161fig.

Cang Pond, 103, 122n22

Cao, state of, 398, 407

Cao Gong, 235n11

Cao Pi, 366n71

capital: criteria for, 69, 199n47; definition of term, 15, 45n57, 74n52; in Qin and Western Han compared with later imperial capitals, 69

“capital corridor,” 164map, 172n39

Capital Granary, 47n76, 110, 111, 126n70; aerial view of, 112fig.

Capitoline Hill, 35, 86

Carlu, Jacque, reconstruction of Temple of Jupiter, 30fig.

carriages: laws regarding, 120, 129n118; models found in tombs, 135, 137; and status, 117, 128n100. *See also* chariots

carts, pulled by humans, 128n106

Cassia Palace, 65, 78

castra Praetoria (Praetorian barracks), 85, 86

Celsus, 441, 457

cemeteries: family, 30, 133, 142, 149nn36,37, 172nn31,32, 506; of laborers and convicts, 10, 44nn32,36; located outside city walls, 30, 169. *See also* burial culture; burials; Longshouyuan cemetery; Panjiazhuang cemetery; tombs

- central axis: of Beijing compared with Chang'an, 64, 73n29; of Chang'an, 62–64, 63fig.; lacking in Luoyang, 74n51; in Rome versus Chang'an, 70; under Wang Meng compared with early Western Han, 69
- centralization, transportation and, 116–17, 128n93
- ceramic vessels: in Core Han Culture, 160; green-glazed, 161–62, 161fig., 164, 165map, 169; painted, 157, 158fig. *See also* pottery models
- Chai Yi, 108, 516n24
- Chan River, 100, 122n11
- Chancellor: biographies and tables of, 481, 482–83, 496, 497; conflict with Colonel of Internal Security, 248–49; position of, 241, 257n8; resettlement at Duling, 202, 204, 206, 212, 214; salary rank of, 258n21. *See also* Kuang Heng; Wang Shang (d. 25 BCE); Zhang Yu
- Chang Chia-feng, 339–40, 346n85
- Chang'an: areas outside of, 163map; as center for imperial cults, 269–70, 280, 282, 283; "Chang'an city," 15, 18; city gates of, 64; conceptual layout of, 34map; evolution from monarchic to ritual space, 96n49; greater metropolitan, 15; greater metropolitan region, 15–16, 36; ground plan of, 28fig.; layout and orientation, 22, 48n83, 70, 81, 94n23, 191, 199n47, 506; location of, in relation to Xianyang, 56map; map of, in Han and Tang, 9map; methodology for future study, 505; neighborhoods of, 514; north-south axis of, 62–64, 63fig.; perimeter walls of, 24fig., 182; plan of, in Western Han, 76, 77fig., 87; population of, 18, 50n128, 188, 195, 198n43; provisioning of, 13, 99, 108–13; residential space in, 26, 184, 186–89, 189fig., 191; size and shape of, 22, 199n46; social organization of, 10; site of, 99, 100; sources on, 175–76; stages of development, 21, 55; suburbs of, 23; Tang, 9map, 28, 49n111, 74n51, 180; three major parts of, 23; three maps of, 21, 22–23fig.; topography of, 6–8, 22–23, 506; viewed as parasitical consumption site, 512. *See also* Chang'an county; interior walls; wards
- Chang'an City Magistrate, 15
- Chang'an county, 15, 197n9, 213
- Chang'an Han mu* (*Han Tombs in Chang'an*), 159
- Changes* (Yi): and calendrical cycles, 296, 311–12, 313; cited in Gu Yong's memorial, 300; and inspection tours, 307; scholars of, 289n101, 370, 384; used in interpreting omens, 469, 476n48. *See also* Hexagram Cycle theory; *Xici zhuan* (*Appended Phrases*)
- Changle Palace: along north-south axis of Western Han Chang'an, 63fig.; built on site of Qin traveling palace, 21; as center of political activity, 78; chronology and expanse of, 23, 78; drainage pipes, 107fig.; at founding of Western Han, 61; icehouse of, 114fig.; linked to Weiyang complex, 24; in Liu Rui's reconstruction, 27; living quarters of imperial family, 78; location of, 47n78; thickness of palace walls, 72n13; water flow to, 102–3
- Changling (Chengdi's mausoleum): abandonment of, 204–6, 209, 215–16n23, 333, 365n59; and Chengdi's domestic arrangements, 209–10; construction work for, 40, 203–4, 260n40; criticism of, 201, 206, 208–9, 225, 332, 335, 372–73; location along north-south axis of Western Han Chang'an, 62–63, 63fig.; name of tomb and county, 204; population of, 31, 38; resettlement at, 33, 50n122, 150n40, 202, 204, 207, 212, 216n23; site of, 204, 205fig., 206, 207, 209, 215nn17,18; and the Zhaomu system, 208. *See also* Chengdi, two tombs of
- Changling (Gaozu's mausoleum), 202, 208, 211, 213
- Changsang, Lord, 447
- Changsha, 350, 362n2; king of, 363n12
- Changxin Gong (Eternal Trust Palace), 210
- Changyi, King of (Liu Bo), 501n65, 501n78
- Changyi, Prince of, 41n4
- Chanyu (Xiongnu leader), 39, 51n139, 415–16, 434nn32,36
- Chao Cuo, 378, 381, 388n106
- chariots, 40, 49n112, 117, 248, 249, 261n50, 419; in Rome, 89. *See also* carriages
- charity, 225; distribution of parkland to commoners, 40, 51n143
- checkpoints, 117, 129n110
- Chen Bao, shrine to, 263, 267, 273, 276
- Chen Nong, 377
- Chen Qiaoyi, 124n48
- Chen Sheng, 299, 318n43
- Chen Suzhen, 290n121, 463, 474n7
- Chen Tang: action against Xiongnu leader, 206, 215n20, 276, 374; biography of, on Chengdi's tombs, 206–7, 210; exile of, 259n33; mentioned, 288n86, 345n59
- Chen Xi, 497

- Chen Yuan, 388n91
- Cheng, King of Zhou, 485, 489, 492, 502n93
- Cheng Dachang, *Yonglu (Record of Yong)*, 45n55, 72n12, 121n5, 122n21
- Cheng Lingquan, 148n8
- Chengdi (r. 33–7 BCE): abolished bureaucratic ranks in 23 BCE, 242–43, 258n20; apartments of, 21, 48n82; appointments and policies of, 5–11, 41n10, 42n13; attempts to curb Wang family power, 5, 41nn9,11, 240–41, 245–48, 333, 335; Basic Annals of, 204, 223; burial of, 201; and the burial of Yuandi, 274–75; compared with Caesar Augustus, 35; compared with Wudi, 12–13; contrasted with Xuandi and Yuandi, 234; controversies under, 227–30; court reforms of 8 BCE, 240, 241–45, 247, 253–54, 256–57n6, 257n13; criticism of personal behavior, 223–26, 233, 343n26; death of, 49n118, 339, 354, 363n27; edicts concerning omens, 323, 325, 326; favored *Documents* over *Annals*, 469–70; fiscal restraint under, 39–40, 44n34; and Gu Yong's memorial regarding dynastic cycles, 296–302, 317n35; heir to, 261n50, 277, 328–29, 333, 343n26, 355, 359–60, 373; high officials of, 222, 241–42, 253; and the imperial cults, 66–67, 227–28, 264, 272, 273, 275, 288n79; library and museum projects, 43n19, 382; incognito excursions of, 332, 333, 335, 338; influence of consort families on, 224; love of women and strong drink, 222–24, 235n17; and mausoleum towns, 43n20, 142, 149n38; natural disasters under, 18*chart*, 223, 276, 296, 299, 300–301, 316n19; negative accounts of, 5–6, 42n16; new conceptual basis for the capital under, 66–69; and notion that central government should “not trouble the common people,” 108; offspring of, 223, 234, 235n11; omen reports under, 42n15, 324, 325–30, 331–34, 343n15; patronage of classicists, 452; reign of, 4–5, 76, 219; relationship with the Wang family, 258n25, 326; restoration of kingdoms, 356–58; role of, as emperor, 221–22; significance of, 35–38, 219, 233; tomb at Changling, 150n40, 203, 206, 207, 209–10; tomb at Yanling, 202, 204, 214n3; twentieth-century views of, 5, 6, 41nn5,6, 256n5; two tombs of, 201, 203–10, 216n35, 372; vacillation of, 210, 226, 234; visits outside the capital, 31, 32*map*. *See also* Changling
- Chengdu, 16
- Chengguo Canal, 104
- Chengyang: abolition of, 358; dates of, 350; kings of, 352; restoration of, 348, 357, 358, 359
- chidao* (imperial highway), 22, 64, 116–17, 128n95
- children's ditties, 12, 123n26
- chime sets, 47n80
- Chiyao (God of War), 284n1
- Chu (kingdom): dates of existence, 351; imperial progresses to, 268; influence on Western Han burial culture, 155, 156*fig.*; kings of, 352, 354–55, 363nn10,13, 488; migration of families from, 211
- Chu, Master. *See* Chu Shaosun
- Chu Da, 478–79
- chu ling* (prelimary tombs), 201–2, 207, 215n4
- Chu Shaosun (Master Chu): as Academician under Xuandi, 478; additions to the *Shiji*, 354–55, 363n27, 477–78, 480–82, 483, 494–95, 496–97, 500n50; on the “arts associated with the classics,” 479, 492, 494, 498n15; assessment of Han Wudi, 490–91, 494; biography of, 478–80; claims regarding Liu clan, 485–86; content of *Shiji* contributions, 484–90, 503n100; contrasted with Sima Qian, 487, 489–90, 490, 493; critical of Wang family, 483–84, 495; criticized by Sima Zhen, 496; on the execution of Yang Yun, 427–28, 439n129; and gossip about affairs at court, 484, 494; “Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor,” 490–91; and “Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings,” 478, 480, 481, 482, 486–90; identity of, 477, 499n36; introductory remarks to “Table of the Marquises Enfeoffed since the Jianyuan Period,” 495; on King Xiao of Liang, 491–92; *Odes* scholarship of, 479, 498n15; posts and positions of, 479, 499n25; and the role of Huo Guang, 484–85; style and language of, 481, 484, 494, 500n53
- Chu Yi jiazhuan (The Family Traditions of Chu Yi)*, 478
- Chucheng Gate Bridge, 124n44
- Chuci (Songs of Chu)*, 430; *Lisao (Encountering Sorrow)*, 395, 401, 430; “She Jiang” (“Crossing the Yangzi”), 394
- Chunqiu*. *See* *Annals*
- Chunqiu fanlu (Elegant Crown for the Annals)*; attrib. Dong Zhongshu, 185, 227, 317n27, 464–65, 467
- Chunqiu jueyu (Deciding Cases with the Annals)*; attrib. Dong Zhongshu, 464–65, 475n25

- Chunqiu yuanming bao* (Original Allotment Guarantee of the Annals), 472
- Chunqiu Zuo shi zhuan* (Mr. Zuo's Tradition of the Annals), 380. See also *Zuozhuan*
- Chunqiu Zuozhu qi* (Cycles in Service to the Annals), 295
- Chunyu Chang/Zhang, 209, 316n19, 337, 339
- Chunyu Yan, 458n23
- Chunyu Yi (the Granary Master), 443–45, 447, 449–50, 454, 456
- Chunyu Yue, 502n98
- ci zang* (conferred burials), 141–42. See also accompanying burials
- Cicero, fictional visit to Chang'an, 81
- Circular Moat (Biyong), 47n80, 68, 73n40, 364n39, 378, 382, 389n119
- Circus Maximus, 78, 89
- Cishi. See Regional Inspectors
- Citong, 127n92
- city walls: constructed during reign of Huidi, 61–62, 72n22, 80; measurements of, 80; and north-south axis of the capital, 69, 74n51; in Qin, 57–58, 71n8; remains of, at Ba Cheng Gate, 24fig.; of Rome, 80–81; scholarship on, 94n12; as sign of authoritarian control, 512; Wudi's disregard of, 65. See also exterior walls; interior walls
- civil law, 129n112
- civil service, 506
- Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*), 74n49, 289n112, 361
- “classical turn”: Chengdi's reign as, 12, 219, 362; dating of, 508; and medicine, 450–54, 455. See also classicists
- classicists (*ru*): conflict with Empress Dou, 474n7; difficulties decoding old manuscripts, 450; influence in court of Wudi, 66, 325; influence in late Western Han, 264, 275; influence on Chengdi's capital, 67; influence under Chengdi, 246, 325; influence on omenology and cosmic cycles, 342; influence on Wang Mang, 67, 69, 272; Liu De as, 356–57; meaning of the term, 502n97, 506; and policy toward the kingdoms, 357, 362; view of imperial cults, 264; views on ritual reform, 272–73, 275; Wei Xian of Zou as, 388n109; and Wudi's Ming Tang, 66. See also “classical turn”; *fugu* (restore antiquity) movement; Kuang Heng; Liu Xin; Liu Xiang; Xiao Wangzhi; Zhou Kan
- Clauss-Slaby site, 45n53
- Cloaca Maxima, 106, 124n51
- Cloaca Maximus, 45n48
- clothing production, 232
- coffins, 159–60, 160; nested inner and outer, 157–58, 171n20, 172n32; single, 162, 172n32
- coins, 24, 232, 507, 514n8; Roman, 14fig., 46n65, 507
- Colonel of Internal Security: compared with Regional Inspectors, 261n56; conflict with Zhai Fangjin, 248–49; rank of, 261n57; responsible for public security in Greater Metropolitan Region, 16, 46n60. See also Juan Xun
- Colonel of the City Gates, 15
- colonnaded squares, in Rome, 89, 90fig.
- color, 28; in Roman reconstruction, 30fig.
- Colosseum, 80, 89
- comets: Halley's, 219, 316n19, 337, 338; of 32 BCE, 299, 326, 344nn30,31
- commanderies: administration of, 242, 244, 255–56, 257n12, 360–61; ancestral temples in, 276, 277, 280; Commandants of, 242, 257n13; floods and bad harvests in, 336, 345n70; of Guandong area, 364n35; nobles' domains in, 356, 364n34; rebellions in, 336; surrounded kingdoms, 348; Western Han strength in, 270, 286n42
- Commissioner for Ceremonial (Taichang), 13, 50n131
- Commissioner of Agriculture (Da Sinong), 105, 117, 301, 338, 414, 471
- Commissioner of State Visits (Da Honglu), 209, 349, 471
- Commissioner of the Imperial Clan (Zongzheng), 45n51, 241, 288, 333, 362n3, 371, 385n28
- Commissioner of the Palace (Guangluxun), 257n17, 415
- Commissioner of Trials (Tingwei), 336, 345n73
- Commissioners of the Capital (Zhongwei), 242, 253, 360–61
- Commissioner of Waterways and Parks (Shuiheng Duwei), 212
- compositional styles, 508–9, 515n16
- conferred burials (*ci zang*), 141–42. See also accompanying burials
- “Confucian learning,” 87. See also classicists
- Confucius. See Kongzi
- conjoint burials, 160, 163, 169; distinguished from adjacent burials, 170n1
- Conjunctions theories, 302–6, 314–15, 320n67
- conscript labor, 105, 112–13, 118, 124n47, 231, 232
- consort clans: advisers drawn from, 510; continu-

ities within, 516n30; and court politics, 224, 240, 253; Eastern Han, 510, 516n33; power of, under Wudi, 73n32; and the restoration of kingdoms, 358; treatment in *Hanshu*, 516n34. *See also* Wang consort clan; Xu consort clan

constellations: and Chang'an city plan, 80; and Chang'an's northern and southern walls, 72n22; correlated with Qin palaces, 59, 60map, 267, 285n21; depicted on tomb ceilings, 136, 146; in *Sui chu fu*, 395–96; Twenty-Eight Constellations, 136

consultative government, 510

contagious disease, 125n53, 194

copper, 232

Core Han Culture: contribution of Han Chang'an to, 169; emergence of, 153, 154–58; features of, 159–62, 171n31; spread of, 162–64, 167, 168–69, 169–70, 172n33; and the standardization of rituals, 166; traced into Eastern Han, 173n60

cost-cutting measures, 39–40, 44n34

courier system: exchange of horses, 129n110; mentioned, 129n117; painted brick tomb tile of a relay horse, 119fig.; private, 120, 129n123; regulations concerning, 118, 129n118; time required for dispatches, 517n48

court: “autocracy” and, 253, 262n72; “inner” and “outer,” 256n6; and monarch-centered model, 239–40, 253, 256n1; patronage, 240–41; study of, 239–40, 254, 262n75. *See also* Executive Council

Court Architect, 201, 206. *See also* Xie Wannian

Court Officials with Riches Piled Up (Shan Lang), 414

Courtiers (Lang), 258n19, 412, 432n4

criminal punishments, redeemed by cash payments, 232

Crone, Patricia, 512

Cui Shu, 299

Cuizhu Yuan. *See* Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park

cults, 12, 44n40, 125n53, 229, 289n108, 291n130, 442; *See also* imperial cults; local cults; sacrifices

Curiosum, 514n2

customs duties, 95n33

cycles, 293. *See also* calendrical cycles

D

Da Honglu (Commissioner of State Visits), 209, 349, 471

Da Sikong (Imperial Counsellor), xi, 46n60, 241,

257n8, 259n31, 261n51

Da Sima (Marshal of State): position of, 241; post held by Wang family members, 222, 245, 259n36, 495

Da Sinong (Commissioner of Agriculture), 105, 117, 301, 338, 414, 471

Dachang Ward, 192

Dai Changle: denounced for boasting, 418; denunciation of Yang Yun, 412, 415, 416, 418–20, 429, 435n50; mentioned, 439n124

Dai Sheng, 260n38

Daoism, 404, 405, 424, 436–37n89

de Crespigny, Rafe, 261n52

deng (lamp), 161fig.

Deng Jun, tomb of, 168

Deng Ping, Taichu calendar of, 316n9

Deng Zhongkuang, 307

di (mansions), 197n11. *See also* mansions

Di Fangjin, 287n55

Di Ku, 376, 386n65

Di Qin, 230

ding (vessel): ceramic, 158fig., 161fig., 164; Qin and early Western Han compared, 157fig.; as symbol of stability, 266, 333. *See also* *ding-he-fang* vessel set; *ding-he-hu* vessel set

Ding, Duke of Jin, 402

Ding, Lady, 363n8

Ding consort family, 231

Ding Gong, 471

Dingbian (Shaanxi): mural tombs at, 133, 133fig.

ding-he-fang vessel set, 157, 160

ding-he-hu vessel set, 154, 155, 157, 158fig., 160, 171n15

Dingtiao: connected by Honggou Canal, 126n65; kings of, 348, 355, 358, 359; tombs of, 362–63n8; years in operation, 351. *See also* Liu Kang

Dingxian bamboo strips, 363n28

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 48n90, 81

Director of Prayers (Taizhu), 283, 285n8, 289n108, 291n130

disease: contagious, 125n53, 194; waterborne, 108

divination, 317n21, 485–86, 493. *See also* *Shiji*: “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,” “Biographies of the Diviners of Days”

Divine Husbandman's Pharmacopeia (*Shennong bencao jing*), 445, 447, 448

Diviner Yu, 297, 317nn21,22

Diwu Lun, 129–30n123

Dixi, 236n30

- Documents* classic (*Shangshu*): Archaic Script version of, 380, 382, 391; and correct ritual practice, 287; discovery of, 381; favored by Chengdi, 469–70; “Gan shi” chapter, 317n27; “Great Oath” (“Tai shi”) chapter, 382; in Gu Yong’s memorial, 297; “Hong fan” chapter, 317n30; “Kang wang zhi gao” chapter, 317n24; on legitimate succession, 360; pheasant portent in, 333, 345n52; among texts discovered by Liu De, 357; in training of classicists, 371; used for omen interpretation, 470
- Domitian (r. 81–96 CE), 78, 82
- Domus Augustiana, 78–79
- Domus Aurea (Golden House), 79–80, 80, 94n9, 94n11
- Domus Tiberiana, 79
- Dong Xian, 149n37, 231
- Dong Zhongshu: admired by Liu Xiang, 374, 375, 376; as Academician under Wudi, 230, 463; *Chunqiu fanlu* (*Elegant Crown for the Annals*; attrib.), 185, 317n27, 464–65, 467; *Chunqiu jueyu* (*Deciding Cases with the Annals*; attrib.), 464–65, 475n25; cited by Yang Yun, 426, 438n117; and claim that Han house descended from Yu, 226; criticized government officials, 166; on discrepancy in landholdings, 231; *Gongyang* school of interpretation, 461, 470; promoted Kongzi’s teachings, 229; recalled after dismissal, 371; *Shiji* biography of, 499n18; sought out for advice after retirement, 384–85n9; students of, 479; theory of omens, 342n1; Three Governors theory, 311–12; views on past and present, 230, 238n71, 476n53
- Dongfang Shuo, 141, 491, 503n108
- Dongguo, Master, from Qi, 493
- Donglai, 286n29
- Dongmen Yun, 476n58
- Dongping, 351; king of, 353, 355, 361
- dormitories, for Academicians, 186, 198n35
- Dou, Empress, 463, 474n7, 491–92
- Dou, General, 207
- Dou Ying, 491
- draft animals, 118, 119–20, 129n106
- Dragon’s Head (Longshou) Plain, 100, 121n8, 124n45
- drainage, 48n89, 106, 107fig., 108, 124n51. *See also* sewage
- drought, 312, 321n104
- Du county, 199n61, 202
- Du Fu, “Staying the Night,” 431
- Du Host, altars to, 274, 287n69
- Du Qin: adviser to Wang Feng, 246, 331; cited Kongzi, 225, 229; criticism of Chengdi, 225–26, 343n26; and the Five Phases, 227; as interpreter of omens, 327, 328, 332; used rhetoric of Heaven’s Mandate, 229
- Du Yannian, 143, 438n122
- Du Ye, 246, 316n19
- Du Yu, 380, 466, 473n1
- Du Zhou, 143
- Duan Yucai, 187
- Dubs, Homer H., 41n6, 334, 342n6, 343n7
- Dukang region (Yan), surrender of, 58
- Duling: accompanying burials at, 33; aerial view of, and associated tombs, 141fig.; construction of, 140, 215n21; excavations at, 217n50; name of tomb and county, 202; noble families of, 42n16, 246; population of, 31, 38, 143; relation to mural tombs, 131, 140–44, 147; resettlement at, 143, 150n39, 202, 212, 214; spared destruction during rebellions, 143, 150n42; in “Western Metropolis” *fu*, 177
- Dunhuang, documents on grain and salt allocation, 109; exile to, 209, 340
- Duo Jiao, *Duoshi wei* (*Underlying Essentials of Mr. Duo*; attrib.), 465
- Dus of Duling, 42n16, 246
- Duwei Chao, 389n117
- dynastic strength, factors contributing to, 115, 127n87
- dynastic succession: and calendrical computations, 294, 296, 317n35; and the imperial sacrifice schedule, 277; and the Three Dynasties, 501n63; veiled reference to, 318n43. *See also* Mandate of Heaven

E

- E Cheng (E City), 58, 71–72n12. *See also* Epang Palace
- earthquakes, 325, 466. *See also* omens
- Eastern Du Plain, 140–41. *See also* Duling
- Eastern Han: burial culture, 168–69, 173n56, 173n60; consort clans, 510, 516n33; and Core Han Culture, 173n60; historians of Western Han, 4–5; imperial cults under, 237n51; interpretations, 188, 472; local government, 167; mural tombs, 131; suburban sacrifices, 263, 278, 280

Eastern Market, 83, 84, 182, 183
 Eberhard, Wolfram, 324–25, 326, 340, 342
 economic issues, 231–32
 economic policies, of Rome versus Western Han, 38
 Eight Divine Hosts, 263, 266, 268, 284n1, 285–86n29
 Eight Palaces, 308, 309, 320n85
 Elias, Norbert, 239, 256nn1,2, 262n73
 elites: “cast off savagery and put on humanity,” 41n2; family structures among, 511; types of, 511
 emperor, invisibility of, 88, 96n47
 emperor cult, in Rome versus Western Han
 Chang’an, 13, 17, 46n65
 empress dowager, living quarters of, 78
 Epang Palace: called E City, 58, 71–72n12; imagined during Mao era, 30fig.; Magnet Gate of, 71n9; Qin construction of, 56, 59, 71n11, 267, 285n20; Qin foundations of, 21; site of, 122n17; walls of, 71–72n12
 “Eternal Rome,” 38, 51n135
 Eternal Trust Palace (Changxin Gong), 210
 eunuchs, 299–300, 318n45
 Ever-Normal Granary system, 112–13, 126n67, 231, 238n72, 319n53, 417
 excavations, 13, 18–20, 47n73, 111, 176, 217n50, 516n23. *See also* Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park; Qujiangchi tomb
 exclusionary aesthetic, in Rome and Chang’an, 82
 Executive Council (San Gong): membership of, after reform, 247; proposal for, circulated by He Wu, 247, 255, 260n44; reform under Chengdi, 241, 243, 244–45, 253, 256–57n6, 258n24, 260nn48,49. *See also* Three Lords of the Executive Council
 “exfoliators,” 43n29
 “extending generosity” policy, 356
 exterior walls: defensive function of, 80–81, 94n19; as defining feature of Chang’an paralleled in Rome, 76, 81, 86; ramparts surrounding palace compounds, 78; symbolic purpose of, 81, 94n19. *See also* city walls

F

factionalism: *Annals* and, 462–64, 473; consort clans and, 326–29, 327, 330–31, 337, 371; omens and, 326–31, 334–447, 340–41; in studies of Rome versus the China field, 511. *See also* Liu Xiang; Yang Yun
 factories, 24

Falkenhausen, Lothar von, “Middle Springs and Autumns Ritual Restructuring,” 170n7
Falü dawen (*Questions on the Laws and Statutes*), 188–89
 famine: anecdote of Yuandi emptying imperial storehouses, 12; and dynastic cycles, 300–301; and locust larvae, 466–67; mentioned, 113, 318n49; relief, 118; resettlement during, 213, 217n68
 Fan Bing, 299, 318n43, 343n25
 Fan clan of Jin, 402
 Fan Jishe, 402
 Fan Li (His Honor Zhu of Tao), 423–25, 436n86, 436–37n89, 494
 Fan Ning, *Chunqiu Guliang zhuan jijie* (*Collected Explanations of the Guliang Tradition of the Annals*), 467
 Fan Sheng, 387–88n91
Fan Shengzhi shu (*Fan Shengzhi’s Writings*), 109
 Fan Wuji, 58, 72n15
 Fan Xuanzi, 400
fang (vessel), 158fig., 171n17. *See also* ding-he-fang vessel set
fangji (esoteric arts), 452–53
 Fangling, 356
fangshi: cult sites attended by, 274; and local cults, 280; occupations of, in Eastern Han, 287n48; role of, in imperial sacrifices, 270–71, 283, 286n46, 289–90n114; sought by Chengdi, 277
 farmland, 103, 104, 123n33
 Fei Zhen’gang, 394, 404, 405
 Feichang Room, 43n19
 Feng (Western Zhou capital), 74n52, 121n2
feng and *shan* sacrifices, 266, 268, 479; “Treatise on the Feng and Shan Sacrifices,” 481, 482, 496
 Feng Fengshi, 143
 Feng Qun, 143
 Feng River, 99, 101, 106, 121n6
 Feng Shang, 483, 498n4, 500n41; contributions to the *Shiji*, 495–96
feng shi (“sealed matter”), 215n22, 330, 332, 337, 373
 Feng Yewang, 41n9, 143, 330–31
 Fenyin: altar to Houtu at, 263, 269, 275, 277, 282, 284n3; disestablishment of sacrifices at, 272, 287n65
 figurines, pottery, 155, 171n11
 filial piety, 289n112
 Fire, and the Han ruling house, 227, 236n32, 374, 376

- First Emperor of Qin. *See* Qin Shihuang
- First Forester cult, 44n40
- First Silk-Weaver cult, 44n40
- fiscal restraint, 39–40, 44n34
- fish, 100, 121n9
- Five Beginnings theory, 314, 468
- Five Capitals (Wu Du), 16, 18, 38, 514. *See also* Luoyang
- Five Classics, 44nn45,46, 219, 224, 236n32, 372, 380, 388n101, 391. *See also* *Annals*; *Changes*; *Documents* classic; *Odes*; *Rites* classics
- Five Junctures (Wu Ji), 296, 302, 304–6, 314
- Five Lords (Wu Di), 226, 228, 237nn49,51, 238n71, 279, 374, 375
- Five Marchmounts (Wu Yue), 269, 286n39
- Five Phases (Wuxing): Chu Shaosun and, 486; in letter from Su Jing to Liu Gong, 307–8; Liu Xiang and, 372, 374, 379, 385nn16,17; in Liu Xin's classification of signs, 468; mentioned, 294, 314, 386n65; and the Han ruling house, 226–27, 236n32, 374, 376; Sima Qian and, 501n70
- Five Powers cycle, 293, 295, 314, 320n76
- Five Proofs (Wu Zheng), 298
- flooding: and the construction of ponds, 103; and dynastic cycles, 300–301; and elevations of Shaanxi Province, 102*map*; and labor to clear drainage systems, 108; omens of, 103, 123n26; during the reign of Chengdi, 5, 42n14; relief efforts following, 338, 345n77, 513; as source of unrest, 122n17; and the Stone Diike, 100–101; of 30 BCE, 108, 223; of the Wei River, 106; of the Yellow River, 126n65; as yin disaster, 312, 321n104
- “flying canals,” 102, 103
- food: consumption of, 109, 125n60, 125n61; grain per person, 109*fig.*, 110, 125n64; prices of, 125n58; and water supplies, 13, 99, 108–13. *See also* grain
- Forbidden City (Beijing), 64, 73n29
- forced migration. *See* migration
- Forum (Rome), 78, 82, 84, 95n27; Temple of Castor, 79
- Forum Boarium, 78, 84
- Forum of Augustus, 83*fig.*
- Forum Transitorium, 82
- fou* (vessel), 157*fig.*
- Four Beginnings (Si Shi), 302, 304–5
- Four Directional Animals, 136, 171n28, 173n55
- Four Seasons, 284n1, 285n29
- Fronto, 92
- frugality, 230, 298; in burials, 208, 372
- fu* (summer sacrifice), 426, 431, 438n109
- Fu, Queen Dowager, 74n48
- Fu consort family, 231
- fu* poems, 14, 127n85, 370, 394–95. *See also* Ban Biao; Ban Gu; Liu Xin; Pan Yue; Zhang Heng
- Fu Qian, 215n4
- Fu Sheng, 317n27, 381
- Fu Zhaoyi, 235n8
- fudao* (palisaded roads), 117
- fugu* (restore antiquity) movement: and the King of Hejian, 357; and reforms to the imperial cults, 264, 270–71, 272–74, 275, 280. *See also* classicists
- Fukui Shigemasa, 474n5
- funerals. *See* burials

G

- Gaius Octavius, 33. *See also* Augustus
- Gan Huaizhen, 287n54, 287n57
- Gan Yanshou, 206, 215n20, 374
- Gan Zhongke: arrested as charlatan, 340; association with Li Xun, 340; fabricated predictive texts, 226, 235–36n28, 374, 377, 387n79; predictions by, 379–80, 469; works by, 469
- Gao Xin, 501n63
- Gao Yao, 376
- Gaodu Ward, 195, 196, 199–200n61
- Gaomei, 44n40
- Gaomi, 351, 362n2
- Gaoping Road, 116
- Gaozu (r. 206–195 BCE): advised by Xiao He, 92, 93n3; and construction of Changle Palace, 78; and construction of Weiyang Palace, 70, 72nn21,25, 78, 93n3; and the institution of *zhuhouwang*, 347, 352; offerings to, 279, 289n112; omens regarding, 339; reference to, in *fu*, 197n7; reign of, and calendrical cycles, 303–4, 306; role of, performed in sacrifices, 74n49; special honors and title conferred on, 228; tomb of, 202, 216n33. *See also* Liu Bang
- gatetowers (*que*), 78, 83, 93n4, 191, 507
- Ge Kuanrao, 417, 422, 438n123
- gedao* (enclosed walkways and roadways), 267
- Geng Shi (Restoration), 293
- Geng Shouchang, 112–13, 215n21, 231, 417
- Gentz, Joachim, 464–65

- “Geographical Treatise.” See “Treatise on Geography” (*Hanshu*)
- gift exchange. See imperial gifts
- gladiatorial combat, 89
- gong* (tribute), 252
- Gong Gong, 376, 387n70
- Gong Kechang, 395, 396, 405
- Gong Yu: charged with investigating Liu Xiang, 276; memorial of, 290n121; official promotions, 238n78; overview of weaknesses undermining the empire, 232; reform proposals of, 227, 238n78, 281, 375, 276
- gongdian jue ding zhuyi* (palace determinism), 64
- Gongsun Guang, 444
- Gongsun Hong, 217n23, 463, 503n112
- Gongsun Shu, 315n4
- Gongsun Wen, 476n58
- Gongsun Yi, 501n61
- Gongyang* commentarial tradition: appeal of, to Wudi, 463; associated with political claims, 470; on catastrophes and anomalies, 466–68, 475n31; commentary to the *Annals*, 461–62, 473n3; compared with *Guliang*, 464, 467, 474n19; devalued in favor of the *Zuozhuan*, 472–73; and Dong Zhongshu’s commentaries, 464–65; Eastern Han interpretations, 188, 472; outer transmission, 465; subcommentaries, 472; and symbol systems, 462; used in policy making, 463, 474n9
- Gongyang Gao, 378, 384
- Gongyang Shou, 474n9
- Gongyang Yanshi ji* (*Mr. Yan’s Records on the Gongyang*), 465
- Gongyang zaji* (*Miscellaneous Records on the Gongyang*), 465
- Gou Ward, 196
- Goujian, King of Yue, 423
- Gouyi (Zhao Jieyu), 217n58
- governance, in Rome versus Western Han Chang’an, 35, 44n34
- Governor of the Capital (Jingzhao Yin): charged with high crimes, 45–46n58, 427; jurisdiction of, 15, 195, 197n9, 215n10; Zhai Fangjin as, 208. See also Zhai Fangjin
- grain: consumption per person, 109fig., 110, 125n64; infrastructure projects regarding, 103–4; prices of, 18, 112–13; provisioning of, 108–13; supplied by Roman government, 50n133; transport of, 103–6, 108–9, 109–10.
- granaries: aerial view of Capital Granary and line drawing of Pier Granary Storehouse site, 112fig.; of Chang’an and Rome compared, 111–12; construction of, 111; at a distance from capital, 126nn75,77; excavations of, 13, 111; models found in tombs, 111; serving the palaces, 24; around Western Han Chang’an, 101map, 110–11. See also Capital Granary; Ever-Normal Granary system; Great Granary; Pier Granary
- Granary Master (Chunyu Yi), 443–45, 447, 449–50, 454, 456
- Grand Completion cycle, 295
- Grand Inception (Taichu) calendrical reform, 316n9, 479
- Grand Music Master, 278
- grave goods: Chu-style, 156fig.; in commanderies and kingdoms outside Chang’an, 162–63; in Core Han Culture, 160; female servants as, 156fig.; in Lingnan, 164; at Panjiazhuang cemetery, 154; Qin and early Western Han compared, 154, 157, 157fig.; in Western Han Chang’an tombs, 155, 509, 516n25; winged animals, 156fig.
- grave robbers, 135, 137, 140
- “great brightness,” 305, 307
- Great Granary (Tai Cang), 72n21, 110, 126nn67,68
- Greater Metropolitan Chang’an Region, 15–16, 46n59; population of, 36
- Greek art, 89
- Gu Bing, 343n25. See also Gu Yong
- Gu Jiegang, 45n55, 283, 388n103
- Gu Qu (Old Canal), 105, 124n43
- Gu Yanwu, 429, 439n136
- Gu Yong: appointment as Regional Inspector of Liangzhou, 334–35; blamed Chengdi for setting up private fields, 51n142; as Commissioner of Agriculture, 338; criticism of Chengdi’s activities, 223–26, 235nn13,23,25, 335, 343n26; criticism of Chengdi’s second burial site, 201, 204, 208–9, 214n1, 225; defense of Liu Fu, 359; dismay about influence of the *fangshi*, 271; and the Five Phases, 227; on grain prices, 113; hexagram cycle theory of, 309–11; as interpreter of omens, 327, 328–29, 330, 332, 335, 337, 338, 344n29; and the legal case of Liu Li, 353–54; memorial regarding dynastic cycles, 295–96, 296–302, 304, 306, 313, 316n18, 316n19, 337–38, 516n30; previously called Gu Bing, 343n25; rela-

- Gu Yong (*cont.*)
 tionship with Chengdi, 335, 336, 338; supporter of Chen Tang, 215n20; and the Three Troubles, 293–94, 296, 314; use of rhetoric in criticism, 229, 369; and the Wang family, 259n36, 329; wanted Shanglin Park land given to peasants, 51n143
guan (jars), 154, 161fig., 164; Qin and early Western Han compared, 157fig.
 Guan Gong, 382, 389n117
guan guo (nested coffins), 157–58, 171n20
guan liang (passes and checks at city gates), 128n98
 Guan Lu, 471
 Guan Zhong, 385n16
 Guangde, 42n18, 348, 350, 357, 358
 Guangling: kings of, 352, 364n36, 486, 488; restoration of, 348, 351, 357–58
 Guangwudi (r. 25–57 CE): adoption of Fire and Red, 227; *Annals* interpretations under, 471; dormitory for Academicians, 198n35; local government under, 167; suburban sacrifices under, 280
 Guangyang, 351
 Guanzhong (area within the passes): definition of term, 15; grain transport to, 106; irrigation of, 104; map of Guanzhong basin, 8map; old Japanese map of, xvi map; Qin monumental palaces in, 57; road system of, 116; as site of Western Han capital, 99–100; wealth of, 47n71, 171n22
Guanzi: dates of, 197n25; “Eight Watchtowers,” 184; “Establishing Good Rule,” 184; on roads and maps, 128n93
Guardians of the Stars (musical), 346n85
 guardians’ tombs (*shouling*), 142, 149n32. *See also* accompanying burials
 guesthouses, 118, 129m107
 Guiyang Commandery, 168
 Guliang Chi, 378
Guliang commentarial tradition: Academicians’ posts for, 384; on catastrophes and anomalies, 467–68; commentary to the *Annals*, 461–62, 473n3; compared with *Gongyang*, 464, 467, 474n19; devalued in favor of *Zuozhuan*, 472–73; emphasis on hierarchical relationships, 464; favored under Xuandi, 384, 463–64; outer transmission, 465; political figures associated with, 371, 463–64; relation to *Gongyang*, 463
Guoyu (*Discourses of the States*), 449, 454
Gushi bian (*Debates about Antiquity*), 463
 Guwen. *See* Archaic Script
Guwen yuan (*Collection of Old Writings*), 392–93, 406, 410n66
- ## H
- Hadrian, Emperor, 14fig.
 Hai (earthly branch), 304–6, 320n74
 hair washing, 193, 199n52, 414, 433n20
 Hall of the Royal Road, 67
 Halley’s Comet, 219, 316n19, 337, 338
 Han Changru, 503n112
 Han clan of Han, 501n63
 Han dynasty. *See* Eastern Han; Western Han
 Han Feizi, 474nn5,7, 515n16
Han jiuyi (*Han Ceremonial Precedents*; attrib. Wei Hong), 40, 201
 Han Quchen (Han the Fever-Sore Remover), 445
 Han ruling house: associated with Fire, 227, 236n32, 374, 376; descent from Yao, 226–27, 236n31, 236n32, 316n11, 376, 379
 Han Xin, 172n42, 387n91
 Han Yan, 490, 503n104
 Han Yanshou: execution of, 434n43; listed as Duling resident, 143; and the standardization of rituals, 166; and Yang Yun, 417, 419, 435n56
 Han Yuanji, 406, 410n66
 handicraft industries, 181, 517n43
hangtu (rammed earth construction), 10, 24fig.
Hanji, 346n86
Hanshi waizhuan (*Han’s Outer Transmission of the Odes*), 251, 465
Hanshu (*History of the Han*): account of Liu De, 356–57, 364n44; account of Wang Mang’s rise, 70–71; Basic Annals, 140, 186, 198n36, 204, 223, 420, 421, 469; “Bibliographical Treatise,” 452–54, 462, 465; biography of Sima Qian, 495; biography of Wang Ji, 186; biography of Yang Yun, 411, 413, 417, 417–18, 421, 424, 432n1, 433n13; on court visits of kings, 354; evidence regarding *Shiji*, 477; extracted text from Liu Xin’s *Qiliue*, 377, 387n77; information on urbanization, 36; lists of important shrines, 274; memorials concerning bureaucratic reform, 241; motives of Ban Gu in, 223; number of omens in, 324; portraits of Zhai Fangjin and He Wu, 246; record of construction of Yuandi’s tomb, 215n4; on resettlement at Duling, 143; source for Han historians, 175, 264; “Table of Meritorious Subjects,” 420; “Table of Officers and Minis-

- ters,” 420, 513; “Table on Figures, Ancient and Modern,” 513; on the Transport Canal, 124n48; “Treatise on Food and Money,” 26; “Treatise on Geography,” 31, 42n18, 49nn102,105, 180, 203, 356; “Treatise on Pitch Pipes and Calendars,” 376, 386n63; “Treatise on the Five Phases,” 372, 375; “Treatise on the Suburban Sacrifices,” 272, 273, 278, 279, 287n65; on Wang Feng, 259n32. *See also* Ban Gu; *Hou Hanshu*
- Hanzhong Commandery, 63fig., 106, 109, 352
- Hao (Western Zhou capital), 74n52, 121n2
- hao gu* movement, 357, 367. *See also* classicists; *fugu* (restore antiquity) movement
- Hao Pond, 100, 103, 123nn24,25
- Hao River, 99, 100, 121n6, 123n27
- he* (vessel), 158fig., 164; Qin and early Western Han compared, 157fig. *See also* *ding-he-fang* vessel set; *ding-he-hu* vessel set
- He, Attendant, 447, 449, 454, 456
- He Qingguo, 196
- He Ruyue, at proposed Changling site, 205fig.
- He Wu: career path of, 247, 259n31, 260n44; and effort to limit landholdings, 231; initial proposal for the Executive Council, 247, 260n44, 262n71; and the power of the Wang clan under Chengdi, 246–47; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 245, 248–50, 251, 253, 255–56, 258–59n27, 258n26, 261n52, 360; reputation for honesty and classical erudition, 259–60n38; and the Three Lords, 281
- He Xiu, 467, 471–72
- he zang*. *See* joint burials
- healing cults, 12, 125n53, 442. *See also* medicine
- Heaven: role of, in ritual, 273, 279, 281, 289n112. *See also* Heaven and Earth; Mandate of Heaven
- Heaven and Earth: sacrifices to, 73n39, 228–29, 263, 279, 375; in Yuanshi Ceremonies, 281
- Hedong Commandery, 112, 418, 419, 429
- heir apparent, living quarters of, 78
- Hejian: creation of, 348; king of, 356–57, 462; restoration of, 356–57; years in operation, 350
- Henei Commandery, 386n44, 392, 396–97, 408
- Heng Bridge, 124n44
- Heng City Gate, 183, 191
- Heng Pass (Tong Pass), 116, 127n92
- hermits, 370, 384n2. *See also* reclusion
- Herophilus of Chalcedon, *Against Common Opinions*, 457
- Hetu lu yun fa* (*Cyclical Patterns Recorded in the Yellow River Chart*), 295
- Hexagram Cycle theory, 306–11, 315, 320n79
- Hexagram-*qi* theories, 309–10, 311, 321n88
- Hexi, 213
- “high culture,” 3, 41n2
- highway system, 10, 116, 118. *See also* roads
- Hobsbawm, Eric, 457n3
- Hölscher, Tonio, 74n53, 509
- Hong Gong, 371, 373
- Honggou Canal, 110, 125–26n65
- Hongmen Banquet, 199n50
- Hongnong Commandery, 16, 112
- Horrea Agrippiana, 84
- horses: carriages versus horseback, 117; courier, 118, 119fig.; as draft animals, 118, 129n106; used for public business, 120
- Hou Cang, 148n5, 272, 274, 287nn54,71
- Hou Hanshu*: accounts of Eastern Han consort clans, 510; on Guangwu’s dormitory for Academicians, 198n35; biography of Yang Hou, 306; “Treatise on Pitch Pipes and Calendars,” 316n9
- households, size of, 26, 48–49n102
- Houtu (Sovereign Earth): altar to, at Fenyin, 237n49, 263, 269, 275, 277, 282; and ritual reforms, 272–73; sacrifices by Chengdi, 272, 288n79; worship of, under Wudi, 228
- Hsing I-t’ien, fictive account of Cicero’s visit to Chang’an, 81
- Hsu, Elisabeth, 444
- Hsü Fu-kuan, 463
- hu* (garlic-headed urns), 154, 164
- Hu Sanxing, 122n16
- Hua Granary, 110, 126n70. *See also* Capital Granary
- Hua Tuo, 447, 448, 456, 458n36
- Huai, King of Chu, 58
- Huainan, King of, 363n21
- Huainanzi*, “Yuan Dao xun” chapter, 71n8
- Huaiyang: king of, 353, 363n10, 364n43; years in operation, 351. *See also* Liu Qin
- Huan, Lord, diagnosis of, 457–58n13, 459n40
- Huan Gong (Huan Sheng), 382, 389n117
- Huan Tan, 234, 370, 379, 384n6, 515n16
- Huang Ba, 417
- Huang Lan*, 366n71
- Huang Shengzhang, 121n5
- Huang Yaoneng, 104
- Huang Yi-long, 339–40, 346n85
- Huangdi. *See* Yellow Emperor
- Huangdi neijing* (*Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic*), 445–46, 458n24

- Huangfu Mi: account of medical history, 442, 447–48, 449, 456; and the classical turn, 451–52; followed Liu Xin's *Summaries*, 454–55; referred to as *yi*, 459n48; “way of the *yi*,” 446, 447–48, 453; *Zhenjiu jiyijing (ABCs of Acupuncture and Moxibustion)*, 446
- Huangzhong (Yellow Bell), 312, 321n100
- Huanqiu (Circular Hill), 74n48. *See also* Circular Moat
- Hugo, Victor, 43n24
- Huhanye Chanyu, 39, 415, 434n32
- Hui Shi, 515n16
- Huidi (r. 195–199 BCE), 61–62, 216n33, 221, 381
- Huiwen, King of Qin (r. 337–311 BCE), 56
- Huizhong Palace, 116, 269
- Huizhong Road, 116
- Hulsewé, A. F. P., 12, 432n3
- Hunan, tombs of, 168, 173n56
- hunting scenes, 140, 145
- Huo family, 259nn30,31, 343, 371, 495
- Huo Guang: conversation with anonymous interlocutor, 365n52; death of, and ruin of his family, 371; as descendant from Yellow Emperor, 485, 501n63; and the Han ruling house, 484–85, 486, 495; as latter-day Duke of Zhou, 71, 74n49, 485, 486, 495; plot by clan of, 412, 413, 433n17; posts of, 343n19; as regent, 485, 488, 502n89, 503n100
- Huo Qubing, 149n37, 480, 486, 499n32
- Huwu Jing (Huwu Sheng), 461, 463
- hydraulic system. *See* water systems
- Hymes, Robert, 125n53
- I**
- icehouses, 13, 127n83; site plan of, in the Changle Palace, 114fig.
- Im Che, 439n136
- immortality, 146, 151n62, 268, 271, 290n114. *See also* longevity
- Imperial Academy (Taixue), 13, 45n49
- imperial consorts, living quarters of, 78
- Imperial Counsellor (Da Sikong), 46n60, 241, 257n8, 259n31, 261n51. *See also* Yushi Dafu
- imperial cults: architecture and, 509; associated with rivers, mountains, and asterisms, 269, 274, 279, 287n68; and center-periphery ties, 282; “chambers of rest” in the Chang’an area, 276; collective worship of many gods, 279–80, 282; contradiction between emperor’s personal desires and well-being of the realm, 271, 278, 286n46, 288n79; cost of, 271; and the dismantling of local cults, 282, 289–90n114; illicit sites, 264, 285n10; immortality, 268, 271, 290n114; and imperial travel, 281; innovations in Han, 228, 237n51; and the layout of Western Han Chang’an, 70; magic in, 283, 289–90n114; of Qin, 263, 265–67, 282, 285n21; ranking of, 270; reforms of, 273–74, 278, 280–81; reforms to, under *fugu* movement, 264, 270–71, 272–74, 275, 280, 290n121; reforms under Wang Mang, 264, 270, 271, 278, 278–80, 290n119; sites of, 30–31, 270. *See also* emperor cult; Five Lords; local cults
- imperial fora (Rome), 45n50, 82, 86, 95n27; perimeter wall of the Forum of Augustus, 83fig.; plan of, 83fig.
- imperial generosity, 90–91; “extending generosity” policy, 356
- imperial gifts, 24, 108, 125n55, 212, 243, 258n18, 261n50, 349, 354, 360, 493, 503n105, 511
- imperial library project: catalogue of holdings, 374, 377; and the classical turn, 219, 507–8; and the conceptualization of a medical tradition, 449–54, 455; initiated under Chengdi, 6, 12; Liu Xiang and, 35, 329, 343n33, 367, 372, 387n75, 452; Liu Xin and, 35, 377, 452; significance of, 35, 367. *See also* Liu Xiang; Liu Xin
- imperial mausoleums: archaeological investigation of the tombs, 210, 217n50; Chengdi’s policies on, 6, 43n20; as feature of Chang’an paralleled in Rome, 76; expenditures on, 511; locations of, 34map, 201, 216n33; looting of, 150n42; schematic illustration of, 33fig.; verticality of, 88. *See also* Baling; Changling; Duling; Maoling; mausoleum towns; Pingling; Yangling; Yanling
- imperial stables, 217n74
- inner and outer courts, 256n6
- inscriptions: from Chang’an compared with Rome, 14, 45n53; commemorating roads, 114, 127n86
- inspection tours: by Han Wudi, 32map, 267–69; by Qin Shihuang, 265, 265fig.; by Wang Mang, 307; by Western Han emperors, 6
- Inspectorate, 241–42, 244–45, 258nn21,22,24, 261n52. *See also* Provincial Shepherds; Regional Inspectors
- institutional change, 254, 262nn74,75
- insulae* (multistory apartment complexes), 81–82, 84, 94–95n24
- interior walls: function of, 95n25; grid of “walls

within walls,” 81, 82, 86; as “human cage,” 81, 94n22, 512; layout of, 81; paralleled in Rome, 76, 82
 iron monopoly, 95n33, 217n74, 232, 238n78. *See also*
 salt and iron debates of 81 BCE
 irrigation, 103–4

J

- jade, 10, 21, 44n31, 137, 162
 Ji An, 297, 317n23, 503n112
 Ji Bu, 371, 384n9
 Ji Suan Fa (Accumulated Calculations Method), 310
 Ji Zha, 503n112
 Jia commentarial tradition, 462, 473–74n3
 Jia Kui, 236n31, 236n32, 379
 Jia Yi: cited in Liu Xin’s letter, 378, 381; “Guo Qin lun” (“On Faulting Qin”), 57, 478, 496, 498n8; “Lamenting Qu Yuan,” 309n44; mentioned, 316n7, 389n117
 Jiahe (Auspicious Grain) Granary, 111
 Jian Dafu (Advisory Counsellor), 238n78, 258n20, 259n31, 260n49, 358
 Jiang Yingju, 30, 144, 149n36
 Jiangnan, economy of, 49n115
 Jianhou theory, 310–11, 321n90
 Jianzhang Palace: compared with the Domus Aurea, 94n11; connection with Weiyang Palace, 65; constructed in Shanglin Park under Wudi, 21, 65, 85; dismantled by Wang Meng, 68; mentioned, 43n28, 122n17; used as traveling palace by Wudi, 16, 66; water-supply system, 124n43
 Jiao River, 100, 106, 121n6, 123n27
 Jiaodong, 350, 362n2
jiaohua, 290n121
 Jiaotong University tomb complex, 131, 132, 135–36, 148n15; murals of, 136, 136fig., 140
Jihui shuo (Conjunctions theories), 302–6, 314–15, 320n67
 Jimen, 72n24
jimi policy, 415
 Jin Anshang, 142, 413–14, 433n16
 Jin Chang, 343n11
 Jin Dike, 42n14
 Jin dynasty, 397–400, 401–2, 407
 Jin Shiqi, 444
 Jin Wangsun, 490
 Jin Zhuo, 45n49
 Jing, Lord, 309n45, 399
 Jing Fang: *Changes* expert, 318–19n50, 370, 374, 469, 476n48; Eight Palaces hexagram sequence theory, 308, 309–10, 311; execution of, in 37 BCE, 353; hexagram-*qi* theory of, 298, 309–10, 321n88; Jianhou theory of, 310–11, 321n90
 Jing Fang (the Elder), *Yaozhan*, 319n50
 Jing Ke, 58
 Jing River, 99, 104, 121n4; river valley, 103
 Jingbian (Shaanxi), mural tombs at, 133
 Jingdi (r. 157–141 BCE): administration of kingdoms, 244; and his younger brother King Xiao, 491–92; mentioned, 221; offspring of, 490; schematic illustration of mausoleum, 33fig.; stationed armies against Xiongnu, 72n24; suppression of Seven Kingdoms Rebellion, 65; tomb of, 151n59, 201, 214n3, 214–15n4. *See also* Yangling
Jingfa (Mawangdui), “Guo ci” chapter, 71n8
 Jingshang Ward, 196
 Jingzhao Yin. *See* Governor of the Capital
 Jiu Huang (Nine Sovereigns), 226, 227
 Jiu Qing (Nine Ministers), 123n28, 238n78, 244, 247
Jizi wei Wu wang chen wuxing yin yang xiu jiu zhi yin (Master Ji’s Exposition to King Wu regarding the Beneficial or Detrimental Effects of the Five Phases and Yin-Yang), 372
 joint burials: in adjoining tombs, 160; conjoint burial of husband and wife, 160, 163, 169; includes adjacent and conjoint, 170n1
 Juan Xun, 215n17, 248–50
jue (orders of honor), 172n13, 231, 252
 Jue River, 99, 100, 102, 106, 121nn3,6, 122n22, 123n27
juedi games, 217n74
 Julius Caesar, 82, 93
 Julu Commandery, 209
 Jupiter Optimus Maximus, 86
 Juvenal, 91, 92
juwen (making passages belong together), 508, 515n16
 Juyan Commandery, 185, 198n29, 286n36
 Juyan documents, 48–49n102, 109, 185, 198n29

K

- Kamada Shigeo, 201
 Kamiya Masakazu, 245, 259n31
 Kangju, 115
 “Kaogong ji” (“Record of Artisans”): circulation of, in Western Han, 94n13; “the court is in front,

“Kaogong ji” (*cont.*)

and the markets behind,” 183; features of, compared with Western Han Chang’an, 73–74n45, 181; influence on Wang Mang’s reconstruction, 67–69; on principles for urban wall construction, 80; stipulation of households per ward, 181

Kern, Martin, 127n85, 324, 325, 326

kilns, 24

kingdoms: abolition of, 352–53, 356, 364n36; administration of, 242, 244, 255–56, 360–61; ancestral temples in, 276, 277, 280; history of, during Chengdi’s reign, 348–49, 350–51, 361–62; inherited by Chengdi, 347; and integration of the empire, 117, 128n96; map of, in 33 BCE, 348*map*; in place in 19 BCE, 349*map*; reduction of territory, 356, 364n34; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 360–61, 365n69; removal of counties from, 353, 354; residences of, in the capital, 354; restoration of, 346–47n49, 356–58, 364n47; royal lines of, 347, 348–49, 350–51, 352, 356, 357–58, 361–62, 362n1; ties to the capital, 361. *See also* commanderies; kings; Seven Kingdoms Rebellion

Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park (Cuizhu Yuan), 138–40; excavation of, 131, 148n10; interior of the main chamber, 139*fig.*; mural images, 139*fig.*, 140, 151n65, 513; occupant of, 144

kings: court visits by, 354–55, 363nn27,28; death of, 349; deeds of investiture, 252; designation of, 362n1; father-son transitions, 252; heir apparent to, 349; and the heir to Chengdi, 259–360; histories of, 362n3; legal cases involving, 352–54; power of, 363n21; sons of, 355–56, 364n32; tombs of, 349–50; tutors of, 360, 361. *See also* kingdoms

Kitchen Gate Thoroughfare, 184

Knechtges, David, translation of Xiao Tong’s *Wenxuan*, 14

Kong Anguo, 382

Kong Guang, 44n41, 231, 289n102, 360

Kong Ji, 52n147

Kong Yingda, 471

Kongzi (Confucius): *Analects*, 301, 337, 361, 400, 405–6, 424, 469, 472; in apocryphal record cited by Gongsun Shu, 315n4; and the “arts associated with the classics,” 498n15; buried his mother frugally, 372; cited in arguments and decrees, 225, 229–30, 370, 378; description of a

well-run state, 177, 197n5; description of Lord Ling in the kingdom of Wei, 262n70; as editor of classics, 381, 388n101; interpretation of the *Odes*, 208; mentioned, 236n43; promoted by Dong Zhongshu, 229; punishment of evildoers by, 372, 385n11; quoted in *Gongyang* commentary, 467; stature of, in Han, 12, 507; suffered privation while traveling in Chen, 400–401; supposed compiler of *Annals*, 381, 402, 468; temples to, 290n120; transmitters of, 378. *See also* *Annals*

Kuaiji, migration to, 213

Kuang Heng: advocate for suburban sacrifices, 66, 272, 287n65; and biographies of chancellors, 483; and the burial of Yuandi, 275; as Chancellor, 222, 363n16; cited Kongzi in his arguments, 229–30; dismissal from office, 46n58, 275, 277, 287n65, 343n24; efforts to reform imperial cults, 264, 271, 273–74, 275–77, 280–81, 282, 287n65, 288n80, 290n117; as Imperial Counselor, 287n55; mentioned, 353, 357, 364n43; omens linked to, 327, 328; proposed ban on illicit sites of worship, 229; ritual teachers of, 272, 287n54; *Shiji* entry on, 497

Kunming Canals, 104–5

Kunming Pond (Shanglin Park): functions of, 122n14; naval games on, 23; as principal Western Han reservoir, 100, 103, 122n12; secondary ponds associated with, 103; Tang reservoir at, 122n13; transport and support canals of, 104–5, 122nn12,20; water flow from, 101–3, 122n18; water supply of, 121n6, 123n27. *See also* Raise-Water Slope; Stone Dike; Transport Canal

L

la (New Year’s festival), 426, 429, 431, 438n109

laborers: for building and infrastructure projects, 10–11; built roads in Qin, 115; cemeteries of, 10, 44n32,36; at Changling, 206; to clear drainage systems, 108; conscript, 105, 112–13, 118, 124n47, 231, 232; convict, 11, 202, 204; rations for, 128n106; slave labor, 11, 17–18, 44n38

lacquer: factories, 24; found in environs of Western Han capital, 11*fig.*; as model for mural painting, 148n7, 150n56; as model for painted pottery, 157; production of, 10

land: distribution, 231, 513; for growing grain, 108; landholding, 231, 238n74; ratio of, to people, 109*fig.*

- Lang (Courtier/Court Official), xi, 258n19, 412, 432n4
- Lang Yi, 302, 304, 308, 316n14, 319nn63,66
- Langye, 263, 330
- Lao River, 99
- Laodaosi, 27; green-glazed pottery model of a tower from, 29fig.
- Laozi, 357, 474n7
- late imperial China, 506–7, 515n6
- Latifundia, 18
- law of avoidance, 172n45
- laws, 506; systematization of, 514n4. *See also* Shui-hudi, statutes
- “left of the ward gate” (*lü zuo*), 191, 195
- Legge, James, 466
- Lehoux, Daryn, 322n114
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 341
- Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae (LTUR)*, 28
- Li (concubine), 486, 501n76, 501n78
- li* (measure of length), and the area of wards, 182
- Li* (Rites classics), 357, 360, 371
- Li Bo, “Under the Moon, Drinking Alone,” 431–32
- Li Cheng, Household Assistant, 170n10
- Li Chong, 436n69
- Li consort family, 224, 235n16, 371
- Li Daoyuan, *Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*), 104–5, 121n6, 176, 207, 408
- Li Feng, 388n91
- Li Gai, 310
- li gong* (traveling palaces), 16, 21, 56, 57, 66, 71n3, 123n24
- Li Guangli, 483, 495
- Li Jianmin, 448
- Li Ling, 283
- Li Lingfu, 103, 123n33, 124n41, 285n21
- Li Ping, 235n16, 330, 335
- Li Shan, 383, 499n22
- Li Si (Qin minister), 71n11, 437n91, 438n112, 502n98
- Li Tan, 318n43
- Li Ward, 196
- Li Xi, 217n23, 297
- Li Xun, 236n28, 339–40, 346n81
- Li Yiji, 483
- Li Ying, *Yizhou ji*, 48n86
- Li Yu (fl. 76 CE), *Nan Zuoshi yi* (*Objections to the Zuo Commentary*), 472
- Li Yufang, 209
- Li Yun, 306, 315
- Li Zhuguo, 377, 387n75, 442
- lian* (wine container), 161fig.
- Liang (kingdom): dates in operation, 350; king of, 353, 353–54, 354–55; mural tomb of queen, 131; removal of counties from, 354; royal cemetery of, 350–51; and teachers of the classics, 381
- Liangqiu He, 384
- liberalitas*, 90–91. *See also* imperial generosity
- libraries, contrasted with archives, 507–8, 515n10. *See also* imperial library project
- Lidai fuhui* (*Collection of Fu from throughout the Ages*), 394
- lidian* (ward directors), 184, 197n23
- Liezi* (*Master Lie*), 42n17
- Ligong University tomb complex, 131, 136–38, 143–44, 151n65, 513; images from the walls of, 138fig.; three-dimensional image of the main chamber of M1, 137fig.
- Liji* (Rites Record), 67, 284, 287n51, 291n129, 357
- Ling Canal (Ling Qu), 123–24n41
- Ling Feng, 471
- Ling Pass, 116
- Lingchi Canal, 104–5, 123–24n41
- Lingdi (r. 168–189 CE), 186, 468
- Linggong (Lord Ling of Wei), 262n70
- Lingnan, burial culture of, 164
- Lisao* (*Encountering Sorrow*), 395, 401, 430
- Lishan: laborers’ cemetery at, 44n32; mausoleum complex of Qin Shihuang, 267
- Lishu jiazi bian* (*Jiazi Calendrical Computations*), 316n9
- literacy, 13–14, 18, 36, 45n52
- Liu An (King of Huainan), 384n7, 490
- Liu Ao (Chengdi), 221. *See also* Chengdi
- Liu Ao (King of Chu), 352, 355, 363n14
- Liu Ba, 364n36
- Liu Bang, 6, 55, 384n9, 391. *See also* Gaozu
- Liu Bo, 501n78
- Liu Boyu, 379
- Liu Chang, 437n108
- Liu Dan (King of Yan), 486, 488, 490, 492, 501nn76,78, 502n89, 502–3n100
- Liu De (father of Liu Xiang), 371
- Liu De (King of Hejian), 356–57, 364n44, 462, 474n7
- Liu Ding, 363n28
- Liu Fu, 358–59
- Liu Gengsheng, 343n10. *See also* Liu Xiang
- Liu Gong, 307
- Liu He, 234n2, 435n50

- Liu Hong (King of Qi), 486–88, 501n78, 502n88
- Liu imperial clan: and the kingdoms, 61, 358; and the Mandate of Heaven, 484–85; tombs of, 144.
See also Han ruling house
- Liu Ji, 387n89
- Liu Jia, 350, 353
- Liu Jiao, 371
- Liu Jing, 142, 365n51
- Liu Ju, 463, 501n78
- Liu Kang (King of Dingtao): blamed for omen, 327, 330, 332, 355; court visit of, 359; death of, 365n60; father of Liu Xin (Aidi), 346n87, 359–60; mentioned, 235n8, 362n2; mother of, 360; as possible heir, 222, 330, 355, 365n60; thwarted by Wang Feng, 355, 364n29; tomb of, 362n8
- Liu Li, 353–54, 354–55
- Liu Liang, 356, 364n35
- liu min* (people not on the tax registers), 124n47
- Liu Qin (King of Huaiyang), 353, 363nn10,16, 364n43
- Liu Qingzhu, 45n57, 209
- Liu Rui, 23fig., 48n83, 72n25, 362n8; ground plan of Western Chang'an, 27, 28fig.
- Liu Sheng, 358
- Liu Tseng-kuei, 113, 126n70
- Liu Wen, 363n10
- Liu Wu, 350
- Liu Xiang, 371–74; admiration for Dong Zhongshu, 374; advised Chengdi to establish Circular Moat, 73n40; ancestry of, 391; appointments under Chengdi, 385n12; appreciated by Chengdi, 335; argued for old rites, 228, 275–76, 375, 374; *Bielu* (*Separate Record*) inventory, 377, 387n77, 480, 495–96; catalogue of omens, 329, 330, 344n45; cited Kongzi in *Xinxu* and *Shuoyuan*, 229; and claim of Han ruling house's Yao lineage, 226; collation of texts and creation of critical editions, 12, 42n17, 250, 370, 377, 451, 452, 482; compared with Liu Xin, 375–76; compilation of medical bibliography, 442, 452, 455; coordinated calendars, 374, 385n33; criticism of Chengdi's burial site at Changling, 201, 208, 210, 216n35, 217n48, 335, 365n59, 372–73; criticism of Gan Zhongke, 226, 340; criticism of Wang-family ambitions, 250, 370, 372; death of, 262n65; embroiled in court factionalism, 215n20, 343n11, 371; *Guliang* proponent, 371, 374, 375, 378; *Hongfan lun*, 379; *Hongfan wuxing zhuan lun* (*On the Great Plan's Wuxing Traditions*), 372; and the imperial library project, 35, 329, 343n33, 367, 372, 387n75, 452; imprisoned for opposition to Shi Xian, 276; as interpreter of omens, 327, 329, 338, 344n30, 346n90; involvement in alchemy, 371; *Lienü zhuan* (*Biographies of Exemplary Women*), 196, 335, 373; line of, 363n13; name change of, 343n10, 372; political and intellectual orientation, 261–62n63; predicted end of the dynasty, 373; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 250–52, 253; relied on historical examples in memorials, 371–72, 376; role in enforcing imperial clan precedents, 288n83; shared interpretations with Dong Zhongshu, 375, 376; and the *Shiji*, 477, 498n4, 500n43; *Shuiyuan* (*Shuoyuan*; Profusion of Persuasions), 241, 250–52, 262n66, 332, 357, 373, 385n23; story about the “woman of principle,” 192–93, 192fig.; students of, 496; temperament of, 373; “Treatise on the Five Phases,” 374; use of omen to attack Palace Writers, 324–25; use of omens and anecdotes to criticize Wang family, 332; used rhetoric of Mandate of Heaven, 208, 229; view of bureaucratic ranks and duties, 241; views on Xiongnu, 276; writings of, 374, 385n35; *Xinxu* (*New Order*), 332, 373, 385n23; on *zhi* (substance) versus *wen* (refinement), 230; and the *Zuozhuan*, 378–79
- Liu Xin (King of Dingtao), 355, 359–60, 365n61, 362n8. *See also* Aidi
- Liu Xin (son of Liu Xiang): advice to Wang Mang on ritual, 278, 281, 289nn101,102,109; as advocate for *Zuozhuan*, 367, 377–79, 380, 383, 388n91, 391–92, 472–73; and the Archaic Script group, 288n88; biography of, 380; as calendrical expert, 311–12, 376, 379; changed his name to Liu Xiu, 391; cited *Zuozhuan*, 375, 376, 393, 397–98, 399, 406, 407; and claim of Han ruling house's Yao lineage, 226, 236n30; as commandery governor, 374, 386n44, 392, 396–97; compared with Liu Xiang, 375–76; contributions to the preservation of Chinese literature, 370; criticism of Gan Zhongke, 226; as editor of classics, 12, 391–92, 451; ennoblement of, 375, 386n49; death of, 375, 406; exile of, 392, 392map, 397–98, 402–6; and the imperial library project, 35, 377, 452; implicated in plot to eliminate Wang Mang, 375, 380, 406; letter to Academicians, 374, 377–78, 380–84, 386n42, 387n82, 391–92; medical bibliography

- of, 452–54, 455; opposed reduction in shrines, 375; posts and positions of, 374–75, 386n43, 391, 392, 395–96; *Qilüe* (*Seven Summaries*), 377, 379, 387nn73,77, 391, 442, 452–54, 455, 480; relationships with other men of letters, 384n6; service under Wang Mang, 375, 406; *Shijing* (*Passage of the Generations*), 236n30, 374, 376, 386n63; sought to develop vocabulary of signs, 467–68; *Sui chu fu* (“Obtaining My First Official Post” *fu*), 380, 391, 392–408; support for Wang Mang, 234, 370, 374–75, 376, 380; writings of, 374
- Liu Xing (King of Zhongshan), 355, 358
- Liu Xiu. *See* Liu Xin (son of Liu Xiang)
- Liu Xu (King of Guangling), 364n36, 486, 488, 501nn76,78
- Liu Yan, 354
- Liu Yu (King of Dongping), 353, 355, 361
- Liu Yu (King of Lu), 382
- Liu Yuan, 356
- Liu Zhiji, *Shitong* (*Thorough Discussion of History*), 482, 496, 513
- Liu Zijun. *See* Liu Xin (son of Liu Xiang)
- Liu Zizheng. *See* Liu Xiang
- Liu Zong (Six Great Ones), 278, 289n101, 289n110
- Liufu Canals (Six Support Canals), 104
- Livy, 81
- Liye manuscript cache, 506, 514n4
- lizheng* (ward prefects), 184, 197n23
- Lloyd, Geoffrey, 455
- local cults: contrasted with state cults, 284, 285n8, 291n130; downgrading of, in reforms, 281, 282, 289–90n114; in Eastern Han, 289n108; and reform of the imperial cults, 290nn118,119; and Wang Mang’s reforms, 280
- local government: civil and military, 172n46; and the court’s civilizing project, 166; in Eastern Han, 167; extent of, 506; and the law of avoidance, 172n45; length of service, 167–68. *See also* commanderies
- local strongmen, 126–27n79
- locust larvae, famine disaster involving, 466–67
- Loewe, Michael: on modernists and reformers, 288n88, 462; on Dong Zhongshu’s *Elegant Crown*, 465; on Du Qin and Gu Yong, 343n26; on establishment of Wudi’s sons as kings, 364n49; *Everyday Life in Early Imperial China during the Han Period*, 509; mentioned, 356, 474n5; rendering of Han titles, xi, 16
- “logics of urban form,” 75, 87, 92–93
- longevity, 371, 443, 448, 458n36. *See also* immortality
- Longshou Canal, 104, 123n33
- Longshou Mountains, 59, 94n20. *See also* Weiyang Palace; Xingle Palace
- Longshou (Dragon’s Head) Plain, 100, 121n8, 124n45
- Longshouyuan cemetery: grave goods, 155, 156fig.; nested coffins, 158, 171n20; occupants, 172n13; tomb style, 156fig., 171n14
- Longxi Commandery, 213, 517n48
- Lot, Ferdinand, 46n64
- Lou Hu, 196
- Lou Jing, 217n53
- Lou’s Old Ward (Lou Jiu Li), 196
- Lu (kingdom): associated with Black, 236n43; dates in operation, 350; kings of, 382, 388n112; ritual tradition, 381, 388n109, 463, 474n19
- lǜ* (ward gates), 176, 180, 184, 187, 195
- Lǜ, Empress, 41n4, 221, 489–90
- Lǜ Dafang, map of Han and Tang Chang’an, 9fig., 10
- Lǜ family, 259n30, 373
- Lu Jia, 342n1, 483
- Lǜ Jizhu, 492
- Lu Kang, 468
- Lǜ Shihao, 480, 487, 500n43, 503–4n119
- Lǜ Simian, 12, 41n5, 51n143
- Lu Wenshu, 302, 304, 315n3
- Lu Zhonglian, 431, 440n148
- lǜ zuo* (left of the ward gate), 191, 195
- Lǜ Zuqian, 482, 500n43
- Lu’an, 350, 362n2; king of, 363n28
- Luan Ying, 400
- Lude city, 185, 198n29
- Lugli, Giuseppe, 46n64
- lumber, transport of, 106
- Luminous Terrace, 364n39
- Lunyu* (*Analects*), 301, 337, 361, 400, 405, 424, 469, 472
- Luo City Gate, 190fig.
- Luo-Wei Transport Canal, 123n40
- Luocheng Bridge, 124n44
- Luocheng Gate Thoroughfare, 195
- Luoyang: attempt to move capital to, 74n51; cemetery near, 44n32; compared with Western Han Chang’an, 22; households per ward, 180; innovations in burial culture in, 162, 163; mural tombs of, 131, 133, 145, 151n62; in Tang, 172n39; urban layout of, 94n23

Luoyang qielan ji (*A Record of Temples in Luoyang*), 197–98n27
Luxia Hui, 400–401
luxury items, 27–29, 47n73

M

- Ma Gong, 471
Ma Hsien-hsing, 27, 196
Ma Rong, 504n128
Ma Xu, 433n13, 504n128
magnets, 57, 71n9
Maijing (*Pulse Classic*; attrib. Wang Shuhe), 446, 448
Mancheng (Hebei), tomb of Liu Sheng, 358
Mandate of Heaven: and *Annals* interpretations, 469, 470; and calendrical computations, 294, 295, 304–6, 315, 319n66, 320n73; Chu Shaosun's claims regarding, 484–85; principle that no charge remains forever with the same family, 372; rhetoric of, 208, 228–29; transfer of, 208
Mangdang Mountains, mural tomb of, 131, 147n1, 151n58
mansions, 196, 197n11, 200n62
manuscripts: on bamboo slips and silk, 176; culture of, 35, 508–9; depositories of, 376–77, 382, 383, 387n73; medical, 442; recently excavated, 409n37. *See also* Archaic Script; archives; imperial library project; Zhangjiashan documents
Maodun Chanyu, 416
Maoling: accompanying burials at, 33; burial site of Huo Qubing, 149n37; migration to, 212, 213; population of, 31, 38, 213; settlement size at, 208; Wudi's construction of, 73n33
maps: creation and compilation of, 6, 42–43n18, 219; of Severan Rome, 42–43n18
markets: areas of study regarding, 26; of Chang'an and Rome compared, 76, 84; customers and products, 26; and the economy of metropolitan Chang'an, 512; gatetowers of, 83; held at the passes, 129n108; layout of, 26; location of, 82–84; merchants at, 26; price controls, 24–26; remains of, 24; social interactions at, 84; statutes covering, 118; term for, 197n6; wards adjacent to, 175. *See also* Eastern Market; Western Market
marriage networks, in Tang, 510
Marshal of State (Da Sima): position of, 241; post held by Wang family members, 222, 245, 259n36, 495
mausoleum towns: administration of, 50n131; and Chang'an city gates, 191; commissioned by Chengdi, 33; cult sites in, 31; described in “Western Metropolis” *fu*, 177; functions of, 142–43; locations surrounding Chang'an, 73n33; relocation to, 33, 142–43, 202, 204, 207, 211–14, 216n23; residents of, 33, 188. *See also* imperial mausoleums
Mawangdui tombs, 144, 155, 443
Mayer, Emanuel, 516n28
medical traditions: comparison of historical accounts, 455; Greco-Roman, 457; and the imperial library project, 367, 442–43, 449–54, 455, 508; influence of the classicists on, 450–53; use of term, 442. *See also* medical treatises
medical treatises: early manuscripts, 442–43; influence of *Shiji* biographies on, 444; *Maijing* (*Pulse Classic*), 446, 448; postfaces to, 446, 449, 451, 455, 456; *Shanghan zabing lun* (*Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*), 446; from Tang to Qing, 455–56; textual transmission, 448; *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorder*, 458n13
medicaments, 446
medicine: healers and treatment, 442, 445–46, 455; as metaphor, 444; origins and history of, 446–48, 456; as a recognized occupation, 450; techniques for achieving longevity, 458n36; terminology of, 445, 453–454; as *yi*, 445, 446, 450, 453–54, 459n48. *See also* medical traditions; medical treatises
Mei Fu, 336, 345n72, 346n90
Mencius, 357, 388n109; “every 500 years will see a true king arise,” 293, 295
Meng Fanren, 182
Meng Kang, 313, 318n49
Meng Tian, 266
Meng Xi, 287n54, 309, 321n88, 384
Menglong Canal, 104
merchants, 26, 129–30n123, 213
meteor showers, 327, 334, 337, 345n75
meteorites, 299, 318n38, 344n43
Metropolitan Area Commandants (Sanfu Duwei), 16, 46n61
Metropolitan Commissioners (Neishi), 46n59, 253
Mian River (Han River), 106
Miaoji (*Temple Record*), 182, 183, 183fig.
“Middle Springs and Autumns Ritual Restructuring” (Falkenhausen), 170n7

middle-class, 510
 migration: five reasons for, 213–14; forced, 116, 127n89, 170n2, 214; to imperial mausoleum towns, 211–14; of 120–119 BCE, 213; of rich families, 214; during shortages and distress, 213–14, 217n68; and the spread of the Core Han Culture, 168; to Xianyang, 154, 170n2; Yuandi's ban on, 214. *See also* resettlement
 “Million Bushel Granary” roof tile end, 111
 Min River, 338
 Ming Du, 471
 Ming Tang (Bright Hall/Devotional Hall): altar site at Mount Tai, 65, 73n37, 268; and factional disputes, 474n7; as “full of hot air,” 291n124; put in order by Liu Xin and others, 389n119; reconstruction of, 279fig.; reference to, in Liu Xin's *fu*, 396; part of Sanyong Gong, 364n39; translation of, 286n30; Wudi's plans for, 65, 73n35
 Mingguang Palace: chronology of, 78; construction of, 21, 65; in Liu Rui's reconstruction, 27; living quarters of imperial family, 78; location of, 47n78; in three views of Western Han Chang'an, 22–23fig.
mingqi, 154, 155, 157; in Core Han Culture, 160–61, 163, 169; in Shuofang Commandery burial culture, 164
Mingyi lu (*Record of Famous Healers*), 456
 mining, 232
 mirrors: bronze, 164, 509, 510
Missing Rituals, 388n116. *See also* *Yili* (*Ritual Ceremonies*)
 Miyazaki Ichisada, 184, 187
mo (intersections?), 22, 48n87
 Mohists, 515n16
 monarchic ideology, 87–91, 96nn44,46
 monumental architecture, 6–7
 Mount Beimang, 43n28
 Mount Min, 373
 Mount Tai: cult sites for the Eight Divine Hosts, 285–86n29; *feng* and *shan* sacrifices of, 266, 268, 479; as political center and cult site, 268, 270; as site of Wudi's sacrifices, 268, 479. *See also* Ming Tang
 mourning customs, 166
 Mozi, 472
 multistory buildings, 7, 43n25; *insulae*, 81–82, 84, 94–95n24
 Mumford, Lewis, 3
 mural tombs: analysis of, 144–47; Eastern Han, 131;

lack of information regarding, 13; late Western Han sites, 131, 132map, 141; layout of, 132; in Luoyang area, 145; occupants of, 29–30, 132, 143–44, 146, 147; painting traditions represented by, 145, 148n7, 150n57; subjects depicted, 145–46, 147, 151n65; from the Wang Mang era, 133. *See also* Dingbian; Jiaotong University tomb complex; Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park (Cuizhu Yuan); Ligong University tomb complex; murals; Qujiangchi tomb
 murals: fragments from Qin Xianyang Palace 3 site, 28–29, 31fig.; fragments of, 29, 132; at Jiaotong University tomb complex, 136, 136fig., 140; at Ligong University tomb complex, 137–38; painting techniques, 136, 137–38, 140, 145, 148n7, 150n57; palace, 146; at Qujiangchi, 134fig., 135, 144–45, 150n55; recent finds of, 29, 49n116. *See also* mural tombs
 music: classical and decadent, 357, 364n45, 381, 382; musical instruments, 155, 429, 438n110; Qin, 438n112; treatise on, 481, 496, 504n134
 Music Bureau, 364n45

N

Nagata Hidemasa, 270
 Nakajima Chiaki, 406
 Nakamura Shōhachi, 472
 Nalintaohai cemeteries, 169
Nanjing (*Classic of Difficult Issues*), 445, 456
 Nanshan (Southern Mountains), 42n15, 430, 439n139,141. *See also* Qinling Mountains
 Nanyang Commandery, 16, 106
 natural disasters: and calendrical cycles, 293, 296, 299, 312–13, 314, 315n3; “catastrophies and anomalies,” 466–68, 475n31; under Chengdi, 18chart, 223, 276, 299, 300–301; omen theories regarding, 296; during the reigns of Western Han emperors and Wang Mang, 18chart; and reported omens, 324. *See also* Three Troubles (San Nan)
 Neishi (Metropolitan Commissioners), 46n59, 253
 Nero (r. 54–68 CE), 79, 80
 New Year's day, kings' visits to the court, 354, 363n27
 Ni Kuan: built support canals, 104; demoted and recalled, 371; mentioned, 389n123, 499n21; posts and positions of, 123n38, 384n9, 479, 499n19
nianhao (reign period names), 515n9
 Nickel, Lucas, 150n55

night soil, 23
 Nine Districts, 183*fig.* *See also* “Nine Shi”
 Nine Ministers (Jiu Qing), 123n28, 238n78, 244, 247
 “Nine Shi,” 95n30, 176, 180, 182, 183*fig.*, 195, 197n6
 Nine Sovereigns (Jiu Huang), 226, 227
 Nine Temples, of Wang Meng, 68, 74n46, 79n46
 Nine Yang theory, 307, 308, 312–14, 315, 320n79
 Ning Cheng, 493
 noble ranks: sale of, 40; for sons of kings, 355–56, 364n32
 nobles, residing in Western Han Chang’an, 50n128
 Northern Palace, 61, 74n48, 78
 northwestern frontier, food supplies to, 108
Notitia, 514n2
 numerology, 295
 Nyman, Michael, 42n17, 474n5

O

Odes (Shi): cited by Gu Yong, 298, 301, 319n56, 353; cited by Liu Xiang, 372; cited in criticism of Chengdi, 225; conjunctions theories from, 302–6, 314–15, 320n67; “Elegantiae” and “Hymns,” 381, 382; Five Junctures traditions for, 296; “Great Brightness,” 305, 307; Kongzi and, 381; Lu school interpretation, 474n19; Mao version of, 380, 388n116, 391; Qi version of, 302, 304, 319n61; quoted in imperial edicts of Chengdi, 469; in training of classicists, 360; tutors in, 361
 official bureaucracy: administration of commanderies and kingdoms, 242, 257n13; burials, 167–68; after Chengdi, 244–45, 258n24; before Chengdi, 10; in court politics, 240; “hierarchical,” 253–54; local posts, 167–68; promotions in, 245, 254; reforms, by Yang Yun, 414; reforms under Chengdi, 240–45, 256–57n6, 258n26; retirement, 167, 173n50; salary ranks, 241, 242–43, 244, 248, 257n13, 17, 258n18–22; size of, in Western Han, 36; vacation days, 199n52. *See also* Executive Council; Inspectorate; reforms of 8 BCE
 “Old Canal” (Gu Qu), 105, 124n43
 Old Peng, 405–6
 olive oil, 50n133
 omens: and bad government, 323–24; belief in, 326, 340; and calendrical cycles, 306; concerning water flow, 103, 123n26; eschatology of, 338–41; fabrication of, 332–33, 340; interpreters of, 327; models for explaining, 323–26, 341–42, 342n6; not read in political terms, 331–34; phases in Western Han omenology, 327; portending the death of the ruler, 339–40; predicting the end of the Han, 338–39, 359; regarding natural disasters, 296, 370, 466–68; in reigns before and after Chengdi, 341–42; reported by junior officials and commoners, 326, 336; reported from the commanderies, 331, 336, 344n43, 345n72; sighting of a black dragon, 331, 334–35, 345n59; use of *Annals* for interpretation, 466–68, 469–70; use of *Documents* for interpretation, 470; as weapons in factional conflicts, 326–31, 334–447, 340–41; windstorm following establishment of Taiyi altar, 275. *See also* meteor showers; meteorites; solar eclipses
 Oppian Hill, 79–80
 orchards, 186
 orders of honor (*jue*), 172n13, 231, 252
 Oriental despotism, 44n45
 origin narratives, 442
 orthodoxy, 507, 515n6
 Ostia, 111
 Ouyang Diyu, 389n123
 Ouyang Gao, 389n123
 Ouyang Sheng, 389n123
 overland transport, 113–20, 115*map.* *See also* roads
 oxen, 118, 120

P

painters, 136, 138, 144–45, 146, 150n55. *See also* murals
 Palace Commandant, 15
 “palace determinism” (*gongdian jue ding zhuyi*), 64
 Palace Guards, 413–15
 palace murals, 146
 Palace Writers, 324–25, 327, 328, 343n24
 palaces: built on sites of Qin traveling palaces, 21; in Chang’an versus Rome, 30*fig.*, 76, 78–80, 86, 92; construction of, 60–64, 65, 517n46; decorations and architectural details, from “Western Capital” *fu*, 27–28; elevated walkways, 88; enclosure walls, 23–24, 88; as expression of monarchic ideology, 87–88; gardens and parks, 8, 43n28; garrisons of, 232; in plan of Han Chang’an, 4*fig.*; portion of Chang’an occupied by, 23–24; for the Roman emperor, 78–80, 86, 93n8; verticality of, 88; walls of, in Qin, 57–58, 72n12. *See also* Cassia Palace; Changle Palace; Jianzhang Palace; Mingguang Palace; Northern Palace; traveling palaces; Weiyang Palace

- Palatine Hill: imperial palace complexes on, 78–79, 86, 88, 93nn6,8; marketplaces of, 84; plan of, 79fig.
- pan (broad basins), 160
- Pan Yue: “Panpipes” *fu*, 431; “Western Expedition” *fu*, 196
- Panjiazhuang cemetery, 170n7; grave goods, 157fig.; typical vertical pit tomb, 156fig.
- paper, 36
- parades, of imperial effects, 7, 7fig., 13, 45n50
- parks and gardens, 8, 43n28. *See also* Shanglin Park
- passes, around Western Han Chang’an, 101map
- Peach Grove Border, 127n92
- Pei Commandery, 345n72
- Pei Yin, 497, 498n8
- peizang mu. *See* accompanying burials
- pen (basins), 154, 164
- Peng Xuan, 345n73
- Pengcheng, 266
- Pengzu, 443
- pictorial bricks, 146, 162, 171n28, 173n55; painted brick tomb tile of relay horse, 119fig. *See also* pictorial stones
- pictorial stones: depicting life in a city ward, 178fig.; showing the healer Bian Que, 443fig.; from Sichuan, 27fig. *See also* pictorial bricks
- Pier Granary, 101map, 111, 126n74; Storehouse, 111, 112fig.
- Ping, Lord, 397, 397–99
- Ping Dang, 209, 357, 364n45
- Pingdi (1 BCE–6 CE): commissioned wards for the poor, 186, 187, 188, 196; marriage of, 374; natural disasters under, 313; reforms to imperial cults, 73n39, 237n51, 264–65; reign of, 166, 315n4, 380; residence for Academicians’ disciples, 198n35; and the restoration of kingdoms, 347n49; and the rise of Wang Mang, 70–71; tomb of, 208; weakness of, 234. *See also* Yuanshi Ceremonies
- Pingling, 202, 212, 260n45
- plagues, 125n53
- Pliny, 514n2
- Pokora, Timotheus, 436n89, 478, 495, 498n7
- Pole (Ji) Temple, 267
- poll tax, 232
- pomerium, 85
- Pompey, 46n65, 93
- ponds, 23, 100, 103, 122n22. *See also* Biao Pond; Hao Pond; Kunming Pond
- poor households: evacuated from flooded areas, 513; given tracts in Shanglin Park, 40, 51n143; residences of, 186, 187, 188, 191, 196, 198n36, 513
- popular songs, 104, 123n26
- population: of Chang’an county, 27; of Chang’an versus Rome, 46n64; of Changling, Duling, and Maoling, 31, 38, 143, 213; and dynastic strength, 115; figures from “Treatise on Geography,” 31, 49n102, 180; of Greater Metropolitan Chang’an Region, 36; and household size, 26; population density based on registered households, 17map; registers, 38; of Rome, 36; Sima Qian on, 47n71; surveys, 42n18; of Western Han, 125n64
- Portus, 111
- postal system. *See* courier system
- postfaces, 446, 449, 451, 455, 456
- postholes, 20, 20fig.
- pottery models: of courtyard with tower from Laodaosi, 29fig.; as evidence of luxury, 27; figurines, 149n16, 155; in high-ranking tombs, 145; from Jiaotong University tomb complex, 149n16; painted, 157; in small to midsized tombs, 509; and the standardization of burial customs, 166. *See also* ceramic vessels; *mingqi*
- Praetorian barracks, 85, 86
- “praise and blame” (*bao bian*), 402, 462
- prepared foods, 26
- price controls, 24–26
- principate, 88–89, 96n50
- private residences, 26. *See also* poor households, residences of; wards
- “proto-welfare state,” 12, 51n143
- Provincial Shepherds (Zhoumu), 241, 244, 247, 255, 257n9, 260nn47,48, 261n51. *See also* Regional Inspectors
- Psarras, Sophia-Karin, 47n73
- public baths, 8, 43n29
- public entertainment: in Chang’an, 96n57; in Rome, 89–92, 91fig., 93
- public fields (*gong tian*), 231
- public honors (Rome), 91
- Puett, Michael, 284, 291n129
- pulse diagnosis, 444, 445, 446
- puppet, 7fig.

Q

- Qi (kingdom): clothing production in, 232; cults of, 285–86n29; kings of, 172n42, 486–88, 501n78, 502n88; migration of families from, 211–12. *See also* Eight Divine Hosts

- Qi Xi, 400
 Qian Daxin, 307, 318n50
 Qian Mu, 474n19
 Qian River, 100
 Qianjingtou, 151n62
 Qibo, 446, 447, 454, 456
 Qin dynasty: burning of texts, 381; and the classical turn, 362; imperial cults, 228; palaces of, correlated with constellations, 60map, 267, 285n21; unification under, 15; used as example by Yang Yun, 416; Water as patron of, 236n33. *See also* Qin Shihuang (First Emperor of Qin); Xianyang
 Qin Gongling (Mausoleum of a Lord of Qin, Yanling), 210
 Qin Shihuang (First Emperor of Qin): building projects of, 21, 56–57, 58–59, 123n41, 267; contributions to dynastic empires, 370; dilemma of whether to entrust land to kings or retain control via commanderies, 230; extravagant burial of, 208, 372; and land transport, 113, 127n83; mausoleum complex of, 267; omens regarding, 339; and road construction, 117, 267; saw *qi* in Longshou Plain area, 121n8; secrecy surrounding, 57; tours of inspection, 265–66, 265map, 267; traveling palaces of, 123n24; trust in Zhao Gao, 373; viewed as totalitarian, 512; and Zhou Qingchen's flattery, 502n98
 Qin Xianyang Palace 3 site, mural fragments from, 28–29, 31fig.
 Qin Yueren. *See* Bian Que
 Qinding xieyun huiji, 407
 Qing River, Great Bend of, 62
 Qingming Gate Thoroughfare, 184
 Qinling Mountains, 62, 106. *See also* Nanshan (Southern Mountains); Ziwu Valley
 Qiong Ward, 196
 Qiu Ziming, 493
 Qu Boyu, 400–401
 Qu Yuan: exile of, 394–95, 400–401; *Lisao* (*Encountering Sorrow*), 395, 401, 430
 Quarter Remainder (Si Fen) calendar, 295, 316n9
que (gated towers), 78, 83, 93n4, 191, 507
 Queen, Sarah, 465
 Queen Mother healing cult, 12, 125n53
 Queen Mother of the West salvation cult, 229
 Queli, 186
 Qujiangchi. *See* Kingfisher Blue Bamboo Park; Qujiangchi tomb
 Qujiangchi tomb (M1): access ramp and burial chamber, 133–35; animal depictions, 135, 145, 148n14; brick walls, 135, 148n11; contrasted with murals from other tombs, 144–45; date of, 147n5; excavation of, 131; features of, 132; line drawings of, 134fig., 144–45, 150n55; occupant of, 135, 143
 Qujiangchi tomb (M2), line drawings of, 134fig.
 Qutai ji, 287n71
- R**
 rain, 185
 Raise-Water Slope, 101, 122n17, 122n18
 rammed earth construction, 10, 24fig.
 Rao Shangkuan, 467
 recipe books, 125n58
 reclaimed lands, 231
 reclusion: and Liu Xin's *fu*, 394; of Yang Yun and Fan Li, 424, 436n89. *See also* hermits
 “Record of Artisans.” *See* “Kaogong ji”
 Red Eyebrows Rebellion, 143
 reformist faction, 273, 290n121, 462–63. *See also* imperial cults; reforms of 8 BCE
 reforms of 8 BCE, 240–54; and the kingdoms, 360–61, 365n69; memorial by He Wu and Zhai Fangjin to equalize kingdom and commandery officials, 255–56; memorial by He Wu and Zhai Fangjin to establish Provincial Shepherds, 255; proposal by He Wu to create Executive Council, 247, 255, 260n44
 Regional Inspectors (Cishi), 168, 241, 261nn52,56, 365n70. *See also* Inspectorate; Provincial Shepherds
 registered fields (*ming tian*), 231
 relay stations. *See* courier system
 Ren An: execution of, 494; letter to, 479, 499n22; and Tian Ren, 493–94, 503n117
 Ren Gong, 471
 Ren Hong, 377, 387n75
 resettlement: at Changling, 33, 50n122, 150n40, 202, 204, 207, 212, 216n23; at Duling, 143, 150n39, 202, 204, 206, 212, 214; and the expansion of Shanglin Park, 141; during famine, 217n68; of farming families, 213; and mausoleum towns, 33, 142–43, 202, 204, 207, 211–14. *See also* migration
 residences: disinterest in commoners' dwellings, 47n75; door numbers of, 187; excavation of, 516n23; mentioned, 10; number of, per ward,

186, 198n36; of the poor, 186, 187, 188, 191, 196, 198n36, 513; size of, 186, 188, 195. *See also* wards

Restoration (Geng Shi), 293

“restore antiquity” movement. *See* *fugu* movement

rhetoric, 35, 208, 228–29, 369, 505–6, 508, 514n1, 515n14. *See also* compositional styles

right and left, 68, 191, 195, 199n500

Rites classics (*Li*), 357, 360, 371

Rites Record (*Liji*), 67, 284, 287n51, 291n129, 357

ritual practice, standardization of, 166

ritual processions, 7, 7*fig.*, 13, 45n50

“ritualization of the capital,” 69

Rituals of Zhou (*Zhou li*): as blueprint for Wang Mang’s policies, 67, 199n44; date of composition, 197n14; and the suburban sacrifices, 278–79, 281, 291n124. *See also* “Kaogong ji” (“Record of Artisans”)

road gods, 114, 127n86

roads: and agriculture, 117–18; alleys and lanes, 22; built in the Qin, 25*map*, 115–17, 128n94, 267; described in *Sanfu huangtu* (*Three Capital Regions*), 180; and dynastic strength, 115; elevated, 117; gender rules for, 127n84; hierarchy of, 116–17; inscriptions commemorating, 114, 127n86; maintenance of, 118; major routes from Western Han Chang’an, 115*map*; markers, 114; networks, 114–15; Roman, 115, 128n94; running through markets, 26, 183; significant features of, 113–14, 127n84; and sumptuary regulations, 117. *See also* *chidao* (imperial highway); highway system; transportation

Roman coins, 14*fig.*, 46n65, 507

Roman fora. *See* imperial fora

Roman generals, cult of, 46n65

Rome: administration of the empire, 50n132, 88–89; under Augustus, 33–35, 76, 88–89, 93; bureaucracy of, 44n34; burial of the poor, 514n4; catalogues of monuments, 514n2; central axis of, 70; city walls of, 80–81; comparison with Western Han Chang’an, 3–4, 13–14, 17–18, 35–38, 70, 92–93; exclusionary aesthetic in, 82, 95n25; granaries, 111; imperial palaces of, 78–80; lives of ordinary people, 199n56, 510; major differences from Western Han Chang’an, 75, 93n1; monarchy in, 88–89; multistory apartment complexes of, 81–82, 513; neighborhoods of, 517n49; as an “open city,” 82, 94n17; plan of, 77*fig.*; population of, 36; republican, 76, 81, 85, 88–89, 91, 92–93; state revenue and military

expenditure, 37*chart*; structural parallels with Western Han Chang’an, 75, 86, 93

roof tile ends, 13, 45n51, 111, 211, 507; photograph of, 14*fig.*

royal lines. *See* kingdoms

ru. *See* classicists

Ru Chun, 319n53, 387n73

Ruan Xiaoxu, *Qi lu*, 387n77

ruler-official relations, 251–52

Runan Commandery, 365n59

S

sacrifices: centered at the ruler’s capital, 270, 280; evolution of, from Qin to Eastern Han, 263; *feng* and *shan* at Mount Tai, 266, 268, 479, 481; to Heaven and Earth, 73n39, 228–29, 263, 279, 375; “local,” 264; official responsibility for, 264, 285–86n8. *See also* imperial cults; suburban sacrifices

salary ranks, 241, 242–43, 244, 248, 257nn13,17, 258nn18–22

salt and iron debates of 81 BCE, 229, 237n58, 238n77, 290n121. *See also* iron monopoly; salt monopoly; *Yantie lun* (*Debates on Salt and Iron*)

salt monopoly, 95n33, 217n74, 232, 238n78. *See also* salt and iron debates of 81 BCE

San Gong. *See* Executive Council

San Ji (Three Bases), 302, 305, 306

San Nan (Three Troubles), 218n36, 293–94, 296, 299, 300, 302, 314, 320n79

San Qi Zhi E (Three Times Seven Distresses), 302, 314–15. *See also* Three Times Seven conjunction

San Shi (Three Ages), 230, 468, 473

San Tong. *See* Three Dispensations; Triple Concordance calendar system

San Wang (Three True Kings), 226, 238n71

Sanfu (Three Supports), 15–16, 46n59

Sanfu Duwei (Metropolitan Area Commandants), 16, 46n61

Sanfu huangtu (*Plan of the Three Capital Regions*): on Chang’an’s walls imitating constellations, 72n22; discussion of gates, *shi*, and wards, 180, 181, 183, 195, 196; on Hao Pond, 123n24; as marvel literature, 506; as source for Han historians, 176

Sanfu jiushi (*Old Matters of the Three Capital Regions*), 62, 72n25

Sang Hongyang, 129n123, 238n77, 503n100

Sanmen Gorges, 106

- Sanyong Gong, 364n39
 Satō Taketoshi, 184–85, 186
 Schaab-Hanke, Dorothee, 484
 Scheid, Volker, 442
 Scheidel, Walter, 49n113
 sealed memorials (*feng shi*), 215n22, 330, 332, 337, 373
Search for Immortality (Fitzwilliam Museum exhibit), 43n29
 sedan chairs, 128–29n106, 128n100
 Septimius Severus (r. 193–211 CE), 78
 Servian Wall, 81, 86, 94nn16,19
 Servius Tullius, 81
 Seven Kingdoms Rebellion, 65, 362n1, 363n21
 sewage: outflow pipes, 107fig.; in Rome versus Western Han Chang'an, 106–8. *See also* drainage
 sexual cultivation techniques, 443, 448
 Shaanxi Province, elevations of, 102map
 Shanbei, pictorial bricks, 146
 Shang Commandery, 356, 364n35
 Shang Yang, 154, 231, 232, 474n5
 Shangdang Commandery, 112
 Shangguan Jie, 503n100
Shanghan zabing lun (*Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*; trad. ascribed to Zhang Zhongjing), 446, 458n13
 Shangjun, 213
Shangjun shu, 170n2
 Shanglin Park: abolition of palaces under Chengdi, 40, 51n140; access to, 86, 145; boundaries of, 21, 47n79; developed by Wudi on earlier Qin park, 85; and the Duling site, 140; expansion of, 140–41; as feature of Chang'an paralleled in Rome, 76, 85–86; grounds of, 85; and the known sites of mural tombs, 132map; ponds in, 23; sacrifices carried out under Aidi, 277; site of Jianzhang Palace, 85, 94n11; size of, 8, 43n28; and themes of tomb murals, 145, 147; tracts given to urban poor, 40, 51n143; used as money-making venture, 40, 51n141, 517n43; water supply to, 104, 105. *See also* Epang Palace
Shangshu. *See Documents classic*
Shangshu Hongfan (*The Documents' Great Plan*), 372
Shangshu yun qi shou (*Cycle Periods of the Documents*), 295
 Shanyang, 348, 351, 360, 362n2
shao (ladles), 160
 Shao Hao, 376, 386n65
 Shao Xincheng, 41n11, 51n140
 Shao Zhengmao, 385n11
 Shaodi (r. 188–184 BCE), 41n4
 Shaofu (Privy Treasury), 20fig., 49n103, 197n12
 Shaogou (M16), 151n62
 shared identity, 507, 515n9
 Shen Buhai, 474n5
 Shen Gong, 474n7
 Shen Qinhan, 199–200n61, 319n50
Shennong bencao jing (*Divine Husbandman's Pharmacopeia*), 445, 447
Shi. *See Odes*
shi (market/spatial unit), 182–83, 189–90, 197n6.
See also “Nine Shi”
 Shi Chou, 384
 Shi Dan (d. 13 BCE), 143, 330, 344n35
 Shi Dan (d. 3 CE): criticism of Liu Xin, 378, 392; defended Liu Fu, 359; and effort to limit landholdings, 231; posts and titles of, 287n55, 387n84; ritual reformer, 272
Shi fan lishu (*The Overflowing Calendrical Pivot Attached to the Odes*), 304, 320n74
 Shi Mai, 398, 407
 Shi Nianhai, 124n48
 Shi Xian: alliance with Kuang Heng, 276; appointed supporters to positions at court, 259n31; as favored eunuch under Xuandi, 371, 372, 373; and the legal case of Liu Qin, 353; and the Palace Writers, 328
Shiji (Archivists' Record; Sima Qian): account of Liu De, 356; admiration for, 44n43, 367, 451; anecdote involving ward gate, 187; authorship of, 482, 483, 487, 500n46; Basic Annals for Chengdi, 351–52, 363n10; Basic Annals for Shang and Zhou, 485; “Basic Annals of Emperor Jing,” 481, 496; “Basic Annals of Emperor Wu,” 481, 482, 496; “Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin,” 482, 496, 498n8; “Biographies of Fu, Xin, and Kuai,” 481, 497, 499n39; “Biographies of Han Xin and Lu Wan,” 497; “Biographies of Sarcastic Jesters,” 478, 485, 491, 497, 500n54; “Biographies of the Diviners by Turtle and Milfoil,” 478, 480, 481, 482, 484, 485–86, 493, 497; “Biographies of the Diviners of Days,” 478, 481, 482, 497; “Biography of Chancellor Zhang,” 483, 497; biography of Dong Zhongshu, 499n18; “Biography of Masters Li and Lu Jia,” 483, 497; “Biography of Sima Xiangru,” 483, 497; “Biography of the Granary

- Master," 449; "Biography of the Xiongnu," 483, 497; biography of Tian Ren, 492–94; "Biography of Tian Shu," 478, 497; on building projects of Qin Shihuang, 57; chapters on medicine, 443–45, 449; circulation of, 449; continuations to, 354–55, 367, 477–78, 483–84, 495–96, 496–97, 498n4; contributions of Feng Shang, 495–96; discussion of Fan Li, 423–24, 425; elevation of, as model for history, 12, 44n43; "Hereditary House of Chen She," 478, 498n8; "Hereditary House of King Daohui of Qi," 497; "Hereditary House of King Xiao of Liang," 478, 484, 491, 497; "Hereditary House of King Yuan of Chu," 497; "Hereditary Houses of the Families Related by Marriage to the Emperor," 478, 490–91, 497; "Hereditary Houses of the Three Kings," 478, 480, 481, 482, 486–90, 497; on lines of transmission from Yellow Emperor, 226; lists of important shrines, 274; Liu Xiang and, 477; manuscripts of, 479, 500n43; missing chapters, 215n4, 480–82; omens recorded in, 324; on plan to construct a Qin palace in Shanglin Park, 58–59; as source for imperial sacrifices, 264; story of Li Si, 437n91; "Table of Generals and Chancellors from the Han Founding," 481, 482, 496; "Table of the Marquises Ennobled since the Jianyuan Period," 478, 495, 496, 500n54; "Table of the Three Dynasties," 478, 496; transmission of, 479–80, 487; on the Transport Canal, 124n48; "Treatise on Astronomy," 316n9, 396; "Treatise on Music," 481, 496, 504n134; "Treatise on the Calendar," 497, 504n134; "Treatise on the Feng and Shan Sacrifices," 481, 482, 496; "Treatise on the Pitch Pipes," 481, 497, 504n134; "Treatise on the Rites," 481, 496; Zhonghua shuju edition, 483, 497. *See also* Chu Shaosun; Sima Qian
- shipments, rules regulating, 119
- Shiqu Ge, 102; Shiqu Pavilion debates, 290n121
- Shisanjing zhushu*, 473n1
- Shiwei*, 319n61
- shiwu* (fives or tens), 187
- Shiyuan, 147n1
- shops (*tabernae*), 84. *See also* markets
- shouling* (guardians' tombs), 142, 149n32. *See also* accompanying burials
- shrines: to Chen Bao, 263, 267, 276; to deceased emperors, 227–28, 375. *See also* imperial cults
- Shu, King of, 485, 501n61
- Shu Commandery, 109, 199n50; Qin road building in, 115–16
- Shu Guan, 173n50
- Shuiheng Duwei (Commissioner of Waterways and Parks), 212
- Shuihudi: manuscripts from, 409n37; statutes, 118, 128nn96,106, 188–89; strips containing burial regulations, 164
- Shuijing zhu* (*Water Classic Commentary*; comp. Li Daoyuan), 104–5, 121n6, 176, 207, 408
- Shun, 226, 236n30, 251–52, 320n76, 376, 386n65
- Shundi (r. 125–144 CE), 295
- Shuofang Commandery: along north-south axis of Western Han Chang'an, 63fig.; burial culture, 164, 168–69; migration to, 168, 213; road to, 116
- Shuowen jiezi zhu* (*Explications of Words and Phrases*), 187, 445
- Shusun Tong, 70, 71n8, 172n43, 378, 381
- Shuxiang (Jin noble), 309n47, 398–400, 401–2
- Si Sheng, 326, 327–29
- Si Shi (Four Beginnings), 302, 304–5
- Sichuan, 517n48
- Sikong, 123n28
- silk: found in environs of Western Han capital, 11fig.; production of, 10; tomb hangings, 144, 145, 149n36
- Sima Qian: admiration for Lu Zhonglian, 431, 440n148; authorship of *Shiji* chapters, 483, 492–93, 496, 501n78; castration of, 501n78, 504n123; on centralization and travel, 116; championed by Yang Xiong, 367; criticism of Wudi, 271, 487, 495, 501n80; and Dong Zhongshu, 479; elevation of his history, 12, 44n43; on Empress Dowager Wang, 490; on exchange between Gaozu and his architect, 93n3; as grandfather of Yang Yun, 411, 425, 432; ideas on calendrical cycles, 295, 316n9; and insertion from "Guo Qin lun," 478, 498n8; lenience toward money-makers, 423, 425, 437n100; letter to Ren An, 479, 499n22; and the notion of authorship, 459n41; on *Shiji*, 437n97; possible ties to Chu Shaosun, 499n21, 503n112; as Taishi Gong, 478, 481, 487, 499n38; two manuscripts of *Shiji*, 479; use of term "arts associated with the classics," 498n15; use of term "idiotic antiquarian," 489–90, 502n98; used medicine as metaphor, 444; view of divination, 486, 493; on the Wei family, 503n118; on Western Han population, 47n71. *See also* *Shiji*

- Sima Tan: and the *feng* and *shan* sacrifices of Wudi, 479; six modes of thought, 370; as Taishi Gong, 478, 481, 499n38; “Yao Zhi” (“Essential Tenets”), 258–59n27
- Sima Xiangru, 483, 497
- Sima Zhen: on additions to *Shiji*, 496–97; on gates constructed by Gaozu, 72n25; mentioned, 483, 489, 500nn50,55; *Shiji suoyin*, 62, 483, 496, 497, 498n9, 499n36
- Siqi Palace, 398, 409n36
- Sishui, 351
- Sivin, Nathan, 441, 450, 455, 458n24
- Six Famous Mountains, cult of, 289n108, 291n130
- Six Great Ones (Liu Zong), 278, 289nn101,110
- Six Kingdoms: allegiance to Qin, 266; immigration by residents of, 154; influence on Western Han burial culture, 155, 157, 159, 162; and miniature palaces at Xianyang, 290n115; sacrifices of, 265, 282. *See also* Chu (kingdom); Qi (kingdom)
- Six Support (Liufu) Canals, 104
- slave labor, 11, 17–18, 44n38
- social contacts, 511–12
- social welfare, 513. *See also* poor households
- solar eclipses: and the execution of Yang Yun, 411, 412, 427; interpreted by Liu Xiang and Liu Xin, 376; as omens, 324, 327, 329, 330, 334, 337, 338, 342–43n7, 345nn60,75, 355, 364n29, 365n60; and phases in Western Han omenology, 327; used by Wang Feng, 332; used by Wang Yin, 336
- Songs of Chu* (*Chuci*), 430; *Lisao* (*Encountering Sorrow*), 395, 401, 430; “She Jiang” (“Crossing the Yangzi”), 394
- state monopolies, 95n33. *See also* iron monopoly; salt monopoly
- Stone Canal Pavilion, 464
- Stone Dike, 100–101
- Straight Road, 116, 266
- Su Jian, 143
- Su Jing, 307–8
- Su Ling, 299, 318n43
- Su Qin, 474n5
- Su Wu, 143
- suburban sacrifices: by Chengdi, 272, 275; depersonalization of the emperor in, 281–82; dismantling of sites, 275; under Eastern Han, 263, 278, 280; and filial piety, 289n112; *Liji* reference to, 287n51; promoted by Kuang Heng and Zhang Tan, 273–74, 279; and the reform process in late Western Han, 283; reinsti-
tuted by Wang Mang, 278–80, 289nn102,112; restored and again disestablished by Aidi, 277; ritual center in the southern suburbs, 21, 279fig.; use of the term, 284n4. *See also* Yuanshi Ceremonies
- Suetonius, description of Domus Aurea, 79–80
- Sui chu fu* (“Obtaining My First Official Post” *fu*; Liu Xin), 391, 392–408; meaning of the title, 393–94
- Sui Hong. *See* Sui Meng
- Sui Meng (Sui Hong): on ancestry of Han ruling house, 226; cites Dong Zhongshu as source, 226, 470; condemned for interpretation of omens, 315, 468–69; execution of, 236n34, 486; followers of, 470, 472; son of, 475n45; story of, in late imperial Daoist text, 476n48
- Sui Wendi, 48n84
- suicide: by kings guilty of crimes, 352, 354, 364n36; mentioned, 129n123, 401, 417, 488, 503n100; by officials as protest, 370; of Wang Shang, 330, 344n35; of Xiao Wangzhi, 148n5, 371; of Zhai Fangjin, 339–40, 346n85
- Sulla, 93
- sumptuary regulations: and the Core Han burial culture, 164, 166; and display culture, 117, 128n100; disregard of, 165; relating to burials, 145, 147, 150n57, 151n58; and travel by officials, 117, 128n100
- sun, represented in tomb mural, 136fig.
- Sun Bao, 471
- Sun Chuo, *Sui chu fu* by, 393–94
- Sun Huizong, 412, 422–23, 425, 426–27, 428, 438n116
- Sun Kuai, 398, 407
- Sun River, bridge spanning, 116
- Sun Zhu, 406
- Sunzi, 381
- Superintendent of the Guards, 15
- Superintendent of the Palace, 15
- Sweet Springs (Ganquan): altar to Taiyi at, 237n49, 263, 269, 273, 275, 282; Bamboo Palace, 275; as cult site and administrative center, 270; disestablishment of sacrifices at, 272, 275, 287n65; meeting of Zhai Fangjin and the Colonel of Internal Security at, 248; storm at, after introduction of new cults, 228; traveling palace and site of Wudi’s sacrifices, 16, 268, 278, 284n3. *See also* Tai Zhi (Grand Altar)
- Sweet Springs Granary, 111

T

tabernae, 84

Tai Cang (Great Granary), 72n21, 110, 126nn67,68

Tai Haodi (Bao Xi), 376, 386n65

Tai Zhi (Grand Altar): disestablishment of, 275; established by Wudi at Sweet Springs, 263, 269; gods worshipped at, 284n3; location of, 283, 289n104; reformers and, 273; under Wang Mang, 279–80. *See also* Sweet Springs (Gan-quan); Taiyi

Taichang (Commissioner for Ceremonial), 13, 50n131

Taichu calendar, 316n9, 479

Taiping yulan (*Read by the Emperor in the Taiping Era*), 207

taiqing (grand purity), 404–5

Taishi Gong, 423, 478, 480, 481, 483, 487, 497, 499n38, 500nn50,54. *See also* Sima Qian; Sima Tan

Taixue (Imperial Academy), 13, 45n49

Taiye Pond, 101, 122n22

Taiyi (Grand Unity): altar to, at Sweet Springs, 237n49, 263, 269, 273, 275, 282; deemphasized in ritual reforms, 228, 273; residence of, in the stars, 396; sacrifices to, by Chengdi, 288n79

Taiyuan Commandery, 112

Taizhu (Director of Prayers), 283, 285n8, 289n108, 291n130

Takigawa Kametarō, 431, 440n148

Tan Qixiang, 122n17

Tang (Shang founder), 251, 294, 386n65

Tang Chang'an, 74n51, 180; digital reconstruction of, 28, 49n111; map of, 9map

Tang Changbin, 495

Tang Yan, 461, 473n2

Tangdi. *See* Yao

taxation, 10, 232, 467, 507, 513

tea drinking, 108, 125n53

Temple of Castor (Forum), 79

Temple of Jupiter, 30fig.

Temple to Gaozu, 30

Temple to Remote Ancestors, 68

Teng Mingyu, 154

theaters, 89

Three Ages (San Shi), 230, 468, 473

Three Bases (San Ji), 302–4, 305, 306, 314

Three Capital Regions. *See* *Sanfu huangtu*

Three Dispensations (San Tong), 208, 216n36, 227, 235n20, 236n43, 317nn26,27, 372

Three Governors theory, 311–12

Three Jin successor states, 154, 170n2

Three Lords of the Executive Council, 46n60, 241, 277, 281, 396. *See also* Chancellor; Executive Council; Imperial Counsellor; Marshal of State

Three Supports (Sanfu), 15–16, 46n59

Three Times Seven conjunction, 302–4, 306,

319n60. *See also* Three Times Seven Distresses

Three Times Seven Distresses (San Qi Zhi E), 302, 314–15. *See also* Three Times Seven conjunction

Three Troubles (San Nan), 218n36, 293–94, 296, 299, 300, 302, 314, 320n79

Three True Kings (San Wang), 226, 238n71

Thunder, Lord, 447–48

Tian family of Qi, 211–12, 217n54, 501n63

Tian Guang, 172n42

Tian Heng, 164–65, 172n42

Tian Ren, 492–94

Tian Shu, 492, 497

Tian Yaqi, 126n74

Tianguan li, 387n79

Tianlu Ge library, 13fig., 102, 387n78

Tianqi Shrine: along north-south axis of Western Han Chang'an, 62, 63fig., 64; remains of, 63fig.

Tiberius (r. 14–37 CE), 79

titles, systems of, xi, 16–17, 46n63

Tingwei (Commissioner of Trials), 336, 345n73

tombs: brick construction, 135, 148n11, 159, 160fig., 162, 163, 168, 169, 171n28, 173n55, 509; “cat-
acombs,” 154, 156fig., 160fig.; commoner, 141, 142, 144, 169, 171–72n31, 509, 516n25; imperial, 170n9; resources dedicated to, 24; shift from vertical shafts to horizontal layout, 146–47, 159; sites for, 147, 147n4; size of, 155, 170n9; sloping entry ramps, 159, 171n26; structures used in small and mid-sized, 160fig.; with vaulted ceilings, 162, 163, 509. *See also* mural tombs

Tong Pass (Heng Pass), 116, 127n92

Tongdi, 398, 399

tower rooms, 193

towergates (*que*), 78, 83, 93n4, 191, 507

tradition, use of the term, 442

Trajan (r. 98–117 CE), 82

transport business, 120, 129–30n123

Transport Canal, 104–6, 105map, 109–10, 122n12, 124nn48,49,51

transportation: and centralization, 116, 128n93; and commercial and patronage networks, 121; of commodities, 127n83; and dynastic strength,

transportation (*cont.*)

115; of grain, 18, 46–47n69; mixed public/private system of, 120; in Qin, 18; in Rome versus Western Han Chang'an, 18, 46n67; water versus land, 113, 127n83, 172n35; Western Han transport network, 25*map*. *See also* overland transport; roads; travel

Transtiberim, 94n18

travel: for public business, 118, 119–20; regulations concerning, 118. *See also* inspection tours; traveling palaces

traveling palaces (*li gong*), 16, 21, 56, 57, 66, 71n3, 123n24

Treatise on Cold Damage Disorder (*Shanghan zabing lun*; trad. ascribed to Zhang Zhongjing), 446, 458n13

"Treatise on Geography" (*Hanshu*), 42n18, 49n105, 203, 356; population register of, 31, 49n102, 180

Triple Concordance (San Tong) calendar system, 311–12, 315, 316n9, 317nn26,27, 379

tripods, 266, 333. *See also* *ding*

True Way Learning, 456, 515n6

Tsuruma Kazuyuki, 126–27n79

tun tian (agricultural colonies), 168

Twenty-Eight Constellations, 136

27 BCE, significance of date, 33–35

U

Ulan Buh desert, 169

"urban communities" (Weber), 39, 51n137

urban development, in late Western Han compared with Rome, 35–36, 76, 513

urban life, 8, 20, 513; in the Chang'an wards, 178*fig.*, 191–94

Urban Prefect (Rome), 85

Ursa Major, 80

Ursa Minor, 80

V

Velian Hill, 79

verticality, 88, 96n46

Vespasian (r. 69–79 CE), 82

Veyne, Paul, 341

Viminal Hill, 85

W

wadang. *See* roof tile ends

Waidu Ward, 195, 196, 199–200n61

waiqi. *See* consort clans

Wang, Aihe, 342n1

Wang, Empress Dowager (Wang Zhi, mother of Wudi), 490–91

Wang, Grand Empress Dowager (Wang Zhengjun): and Chengdi's relationship with the Wang family, 326; and clemency for Wang uncles, 259n35, 333; controlled appointments in favor of kin, 233, 373; edict by, in *Shijing*, 483, 497; father of, 483, 495; loyalty to the ruling line, 233–34, 510; manipulation of Chengdi, 516n32; medical duties performed for, 458n23; mentions Kongzi in decree, 229; mother of Chengdi, 221; objection to Zhao Feiyan, 41n9, 334; refused to comply with Wang Meng, 233–34, 238n82; restored sacrifices to Houtu at Fenyin, 277; and the rise of Wang Mang, 70; support of Ban Jieyu, 210, 216–17n47. *See also* Wang consort clan

Wang, Lady (mother of Liu Hong), 487–88

Wang Bao, 43n19

Wang Bing, 458n24

Wang Chong, 294, 316n6, 346n91, 370, 504n128, 515n16

Wang consort clan: built network of officials, 245, 250, 259n31; criticized by Liu Xiang, 250, 372; fissures in, 246, 259n33, 339; and omen reports under Chengdi, 324, 326–28, 327, 332, 334–37, 338, 344n45; and the power of kingdoms, 358; power of, under Chengdi, 5, 41nn9,11, 223, 233–34, 240–41, 256n5, 258n25, 329, 336, 343n15, 373, 495; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 245–50, 253; regional posts of, 247; relationship with Chengdi, 240–41, 258n25; support for Liu Xin as heir, 360; and Zhai Fangjin and He Wu, 246–50. *See also* Wang Feng; Wang Gen; Wang Li; Wang Mang; Wang Shang (d. 12 BCE); Wang Tan; Wang Yin

Wang Feng: appointed General-in-Chief at Chengdi's accession, 222, 344n46; appointments by, 259nn31,32; Chengdi's relationship with, 258n25; ennoblement of, 504n128; and fissures in Wang family, 259n33; as Marshal of State, 238n81, 245, 326; and omens as weapons in factional conflicts, 326–29, 330–31, 365n60; opponents of, 260n43; power of, under Chengdi, 41n9; relations with Gu Yong, 259n36; rivalry with Wang Shang, 329, 344n35; thwarted ambitions of kings, 355, 358, 364n29

Wang Fengshi, 504n128

- Wang Fuzhi, 516n32
- Wang Gen: ennoblement of, 504n128; great mansion of, 196, 200n62; as Marshal of State, 41n9, 238n81, 338–39; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 247, 260n45; relationship with Zhang Yu, 260n45; retirement of, 247–48, 260–61n49; support for Aidi as heir, 346n87; unlawful activities and lavish lifestyle of, 259n35, 261n50, 333
- Wang Hong, 209
- Wang Hui, 238n71
- Wang Ji, 186, 365n68
- Wang Jin, 504n128
- Wang Jing, 43n18
- Wang Jun, 40, 45n58, 46n58, 206
- Wang Li, 259n35, 261n51, 333, 339, 504n128
- Wang Man, 504n128
- Wang Mang: Ban Biao on, 223; biography of, 198n35; and calendrical predictions, 302, 307, 308, 313–14, 315, 319n60; construction under, 67, 68; created Six Districts, 198–99n44; and destruction in northern sectors, 150n42; destruction of Jianzhang Palace, 65; dynastic color of, 233; ennoblement of, 358, 359, 504n128; flattery of, 471; *Fuming* (Tally Mandate), 376; granary proposal, 126n67; influence of classicists on, 67, 69, 288n88, 370; instituted Yuanshi Ceremonies at Pingdi's court, 278; as latter-day Duke of Zhou, 71, 74n49; on line of transmission, 227, 236nn30,32, 320n76, 376; as Marshal of State under Chengdi, 339; mural tombs from the era of, 133; natural disasters under, 18chart, 313, 321n112; omens regarding, 476n48; and the performance of public spectacles, 74n49; and the power of the Wang clan under Chengdi, 233–34; punitive expedition to Central Asia, 421, 436n69; and reforms to the imperial cults, 264, 270, 271, 278–80, 290n119; reinstituted suburban sacrifices, 278–79, 289n102; relationship with Yang Xiong, 370, 384n6; and restoration of kingdoms under Pingdi, 347n49; rise to power, 70–71, 236n28; stature of the *Annals* under, 471; structures in southern suburbs, 68fig.; supporters of, 234; use of omens to usurp throne, 340, 341, 346n85, 346n91; as usurper, 5, 373; wards under, 196. *See also* Xin dynasty
- wang sacrifice, 267
- Wang Shang (brother of Wang Feng, d. 12 BCE): appointment as Marshal of State, 41n9, 238n81, 287n60, 334, 345nn61,67; criminal activities and lavish lifestyle, 259n35, 333; exiled Chen Tang, 259n33; and Gu Yong, 335; and Juan Xun, 249–50; made marquis, 504n128; mentioned, 234n4, 338
- Wang Shang (d. 25 BCE): became Chancellor under Chengdi, 222; blamed for solar eclipse, 327; death of, 330, 344n35; listed as Duling resident, 143; rivalry with Wang Feng, 329–30, 332; urged restoring Zhou ritual practices, 273
- Wang Shejiao, 181, 182, 196, 197n9
- Wang Shi, 478, 495, 498n13, 498n15
- Wang Shuhe (Wang Xi): account of medical traditions, 447, 449, 454, 455; collation of texts, 451; *Maijing* (Pulse Classic), 446, 448
- Wang Shun, 375
- Wang Tan, 259n36, 335, 504n128
- Wang Wenshu, 129n123
- Wang Xianqian, 218n36, 429, 436n77, 437n105
- Wang Xiaojuan, 406
- Wang Yin: ally of Wang Feng, 330, 331; appealed for clemency for his brothers, 259n35; death of, 235n13, 334, 345n67; ennoblement of, 504n128; fabrication of omens, 332–33, 339–40; and fissures in Wang family, 259n33; mentioned, 260n49, 344n46; power of, under Chengdi, 41n9; succeeded Wang Feng as Marshal of State, 238n81, 259n36, 331, 334–35; use of omens to criticize Chengdi, 332–33, 334
- Wang Zhang: charged with high crimes, 45–46n58; confidant of Chengdi, 41n9; criticism of Wang Feng, 246, 259n32, 330–31, 332, 344n45, 365n60; death of, 331, 336; imprisoned after opposing Wang Feng, 258n25, 260n43; as interpreter of omens, 330, 344n45, 346n90
- Wang Zhengjun. *See* Wang, Grand Empress Dowager
- Wang Zhi (Empress Dowager Wang, mother of Wudi), 490–91
- Wang Zhong, 476n58
- Wang Zhongshu, 95n30
- Wang Zijin, 6, 172n45, 196, 199n44
- Wang Zun, 45n58, 496
- wards: adjacent to markets, 175; blocks of, 189–90, 190fig.; dense concentration of, 76, 186, 188; doors of residences in, 185, 198n31; gates of, 184, 185, 187–88, 190, 195, 197n11, 198n31; households in, 26, 27, 188, 191, 195; hypothetical plan of, 188, 189fig.; hypothetical reconstruction of, and intersecting roads, 190fig.; inner or

- wards (*cont.*)
- outer location of, 180–81, 184; life in, 178*fig.*, 191–94; names of, 195, 199–200n61; northwest frontier-zone, 185; number of, 180, 182, 195, 196; pre-Han, 184; shape and orientation of, 184–86, 189–91, 195; size and number of residences, 181–84; supervisors of, 184, 197n23; walls dividing, 188–89. *See also* residences
 - warehouse district (Rome), 84
 - wastewater. *See* drainage
 - Watanabe Shinichirō, 290n114
 - watchtowers, 43n25, 43n28
 - water, boiled, 108
 - water conservancy projects, 103–4. *See also* water systems
 - water-control officials, 123n28
 - water systems: in Chang'an versus Rome, 23, 48n89; intake and outflow, 100–107, 101*map*, 107*fig.*, 122n14, 124n52; intake pipes, 107*fig.*; as signifier of empire, 108; sources of water to Chang'an, 8, 99–100; and transport of goods and grain, 108–9, 110, 113, 127n83. *See also* drainage; flooding; "flying canals"
 - weapons. *See* Arsenal
 - Weber, Max, "urban communities," 39, 51n137
 - Wei, Empress (128–91 BCE), 501n78
 - Wei, King of Chu, 465
 - Wei Canal, 104
 - Wei Hong, 201
 - Wei Kang, 503n118
 - Wei Leng, 478, 479
 - Wei Qing, 492, 493, 503n118
 - Wei River: bridges over, 121n7, 124n44; creep northward, 100, 122n11; led out to Yellow River, 43n27; and the northern section of Chang'an, 62; and the Transport Canal, 124n48; tributaries of, 98*map*, 99–100, 121n3, 121n4. *See also* Guanzhong basin
 - Wei River Plain, 99–100. *See also* Guanzhong basin
 - Wei Statutes, 129n17
 - Wei Wan, 462, 463, 474n5
 - Wei Xian, 143, 167, 388n109
 - Wei Xuancheng, 143, 227, 276
 - Wei Zhao, 496
 - Wei Zifu, Empress, 493, 503n118
 - Weicheng, 202, 215n8
 - Weiyang Palace: as chief imperial residence and multipurpose structure, 78; connection with old Qin capital, 62, 72n25; construction of new ritual axis under Wang Mang, 67; drains in situ, 107*fig.*; Eastern Towergate, 72n21, 72n25, 191; elevation of, 102, 122n19, 199n50; excavation site, 20*fig.*; exchange between Xiao He and Gaozu about construction, 72n21, 93n3; extravagance of, 93n3; Feichang Room in, 43n19; at founding of Western Han, 61; Front Audience Hall, 21, 67, 68–69, 72n21, 72n25, 78, 102, 122n19; and Gaozu's power, 70; as heart of Chang'an city, 191; linked to Jianzhang and Changle complexes, 24, 65; located along north-south axis of Western Han Chang'an, 63*fig.*; location of, 199n50; looking south from where the Front Audience Hall stood, 61*fig.*; Northern Towergate, 62, 72n21, 72n25, 191; orientation of, 62; as "palace proper," 16; post-holes, 20*fig.*; Reservoir Pond, 102; size of, 23; as urban landmark, 94n20; well at, 121n9. *See also* Arsenal
 - wells, 121–22n9
 - wen (refinement). *See* zhi (substance) versus wen (refinement)
 - Wen, King of Zhou, 236n43
 - Wendi (r. 180–157 BCE): burial of, 208; natural disasters under, 18*chart*; public security problems under, 42n15; reputation as benevolent ruler, 221; role of, performed in sacrifices, 74n49; special honors and title conferred on, 228; textual study under, 381; tomb of, 214n3, 216n33, 372. *See also* Baling
 - Wenshi dian, 387n78
 - "Western Capital" *fu* (Zhang Heng), 27–28, 72n22, 150n42, 175–76, 177–80, 194
 - Western Han: decline of, 5, 282, 290–91n122; methodology for future study, 505–6; periodization of, 16; population of, 125n64; in post-Han memory, 14
 - Western Han Chang'an. *See* Chang'an
 - Western Market (Xi Shi), 62, 82–83, 84, 183
 - "Western Metropolis" *fu* (Ban Gu), 27, 72n22, 175–76, 176–77, 180, 194
 - Western Regions: highways system connecting to, 116; loss of, 421, 436n69
 - Western Zhou: capitals of, 74n52, 121n2; as origin of imperial rituals, 65, 70, 273, 274–75, 276, 285n10; rise and fall of, 235n23, 304; vessels, 154. *See also* "classical turn"; classicists; *fugu* (restore antiquity) movement; Zhou dynasty
 - wet nurses, 445, 458n23; of Wudi, 491, 503n105

White Canal, 104, 123n36, 123n38
 Wilhelm, Hellmut, 395
 Wills, John, 346n91
 Witchcraft Affair, 492–93, 503n115
 “woman of principle,” anecdote of, 192–93, 192fig.
 women: activities of, portrayed in murals, 513; legal status of, 506; reading by, 387n90
 wooden tablets, from Chu tomb at Baoshan, 512fig.
 Wu Di (Five Lords), 226, 228, 237nn49,51, 238n71, 279, 374, 375
 Wu Du (Five Capitals), 16, 18, 38, 514
 Wu Hung, 94n19
 Wu Ji (Five Junctures), 296, 302, 304–6, 314
 Wu Qi, 381
 Wu Yue (Five Marchmounts), 269, 286n39
 Wu Zheng (Five Proofs), 298
 Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE): advised by Liu De, 357, 364n39; brothers of, 501n80; bureaucratic policies, 248, 261n52; canal projects for grain transport, 110; compared with Chengdi, 12–13; conducted business from Jianzhang Palace, 66; criticized by Sima Qian, 487; cult sites of, 66, 273, 274, 278, 291n131; death place of, 49n118; and Dongfang Shuo, 141, 491; ennoblement of princes under, 356; established royal line of Guangling, 352; established the Inspectorate, 241; expanded Shanglin Park, 140–41; expansionist policies of, 290n121, 505; family feeling of, 490–91, 503n105; as father of Zhaodi, 489; granary construction, 110; heir of, 489; and the imperial cults, 228, 282; imperial progresses of, 267–69, 268map, 285n28; incognito excursions outside the palace, 235n17; infrastructure projects, 103–4; inspection tours, 32map; and Lady Zhao, 489, 495; natural disasters under, 6; new shrines established under, 227–28, 263; omen reports under, 325; palace construction under, 65–66, 69, 78, 94n11, 269; power of, 73n32; preoccupation with immortality cults, 271; public security problems under, 42n15; and the rebellion of the Wei heir apparent, 493–94, 495; reputation as ruler, 221; role of *Gongyang* experts under, 463; sacrifices of, 268–69, 479; shrine dedicated to, 228, 375; sons of, 364n49, 486–88, 492, 495, 501n78, 502nn81,100; textual study under, 378, 381–82; and unified “empire,” 6; water projects under, 100–101, 104, 123n27
wugu. See Witchcraft Affair
 Wujiang Long, 260n49

Wuling, King of Zhao, 403–4
 Wulu Chongzong, 496
 Wunderkammer (Feichang Room), 43n19
 Wuxing. See Five Phases
 “Wuxing” (song), 47n80
 Wuyuan Commandery, 168, 402–6
 Wuzuo Palace, 49n118

X

Xi Qifeng, 146
 Xi River, 215n16
 Xia dynasty, 230, 317n27
 Xia Heliang, 226, 315, 340, 479
 Xiahou Jian, 384
 Xiahou Sheng, 384, 435n50
 Xiahou Shichang, 287n54
 Xi'an: conceptual map of, correlating palaces with constellations, 60map; old Japanese map of, xvi map. See also Chang'an
 Xian, Lord, 401
 Xi'an Beilin (Forest of Steles), stone stele with inscribed map of Chang'an, 9map
 Xi'an City Gate, 68, 74n46
 Xiang Liang, 299, 318n43
xianguan, 216n26, 217n70
xianlang (“man of wisdom”), 286n46
 Xianyang: absence of city walls, 57–58, 71n8; approached by Xiongnu in Qin, 46n69; burial culture of, 154; as capital of Qin kingdom, 16, 56; as capital of Qin Shihuang, 16, 21, 56–57, 266–67; grain supplies to, 110, 125–26n65; immigration to, 154, 170n2, 213; as “incomplete” capital, 56, 58–59, 285n20; lacked cult site in Qin, 267; map of, based on archaeologists' reconstruction, 56map; palace complexes, 57–59; palaces correlated with constellations, 60map, 267, 285n21; Qin Xianyang Palace 3 mural fragments, 28–29, 31fig.; water supply of, 121n4; Western Han tomb with brick construction, 173n55
 Xianyang Municipal Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, 210
 Xianyang Palace, 285n21
 Xiao, King (brother of Jingdi), 491–92
 Xiao, Lord of Qin (r. 362–338 BCE), 267
 Xiao He: built the Great Granary, 110; and the construction of Weiyang Palace, 72n21; descendant of, 52n147; exchange with Gaozu reported by Sima Qian, 92, 93n3; mentioned, 21, 177

- Xiao Tong, *Wenxuan*, 14
- Xiao Wangzhi: demotion of, 417, 434n42; as expert in rites, 272; forced to commit suicide in factional conflict, 371; listed as Duling resident, 143; as member of Liu Xiang's faction, 343n11; memorial protesting grain policy, 113; as Senior Tutor to the Heir Apparent, 434n40; tomb site of, 132, 147–48n5; views on Xiongnu policy, 412, 415–17
- Xiao Xian, 143
- Xiao You, 143
- Xiao Yu, 143, 259n31
- Xiaojing (Classic of Filial Piety)*, 74n49, 289n112, 361
- Xiaqiu Jianggong, 463
- Xiasi Palace, 398
- Xici zhuan (Appended Phrases)*, 208, 372
- Xie River, 106
- Xie Tao, "Wandering to the Eastern Fields," 431, 432
- Xie Wannian, 206, 206–7, 209, 215n21
- Xiliu, 72n24
- Xiliu (Slender Willow) Granary, 110–11
- Xin dynasty, 4, 13, 280. *See also* Wang Mang
- Xin Palace, of Qin Shihuang, 267
- Xin Qingji, 207, 359
- Xin'an Brick Factory, 155, 171n15
- Xindu, 348, 358
- Xinfeng county, 203, 215n10
- xing gong*. *See* traveling palaces
- Xingle Palace, 21, 56, 59
- Xinqin (New Qin), 213
- Xinzu village, 148n8
- Xiongnu: biography of, 483, 497; defense measures against, 71n9, 72n24, 286n36; incursions into Han lands, 269; *jimi* policy toward, 415; memorial regarding, 128n98; in Qin, 46n69, 71n9; rebel soldiers from, 133; threat from the north, 62, 191; views on policy toward, 276, 412, 415, 502n98. *See also* Chanyu (Xiongnu leader); Huhanye Chanyu
- Xu, Empress (of Xuandi), 371, 516nn30,31
- Xu Bo, 105
- Xu consort clan, 224, 272, 327, 328, 330
- Xu Gan, 404
- Xu Guang, 478, 482, 489, 497, 501n76
- Xu Jia, 272, 328
- Xu Kua, Empress (of Chengdi): bore son who didn't survive infancy, 223; denounced for imprecation, 209–10, 333; deposed for barrenness, 42n16, 516n30; influence on Chengdi, 235n25; omen interpretations regarding, 328–29, 344nn29,30; relationship with Chengdi, 330; tomb of, 211
- Xu Meiren, 235n11
- Xu Sheng of Lu, 389n117
- Xu Weimin, 48n89, 106, 124n52
- Xu Xingwu, 288n88
- Xu Yan, 472
- Xuandi (r. 73–49 BCE): Academician posts under, 384; attempted to stabilize food prices, 112–13; burial of, 237n46; considered overly harsh, 421–22; contrasted with Chengdi, 234; economic conditions under, 215n21; favored the *Guliang* commentary, 463–64; honored Yang Chang posthumously, 412–13; and the imperial cults, 228, 270, 274; interest in governing, 221, 371; interest in improving local government, 166; mentioned, 111, 276–77; plot against, by clan of Huo Guang, 412, 413; portent of his enthronement, 469, 475n45; preoccupation with immortality cults, 271; retirement of officials under, 173n50; ritual masters of, 287n71; and the sons of Liu Dan, 490; tomb of, 214n3, 215n4, 216n33; Xiongnu policy of, 412, 415–16; Yang Yun and, 412, 419–20, 428–29. *See also* Duling
- Xuanping City Gate, 190, 190fig., 191
- Xuanping Gate Thoroughfare, 184, 190, 190fig., 195
- xuanxue* (Mystery Learning), 404
- Xue Guangde, 173n50
- Xue River, 99, 121n3. *See* Jue River
- Xue Xuan, 40, 206, 336, 470
- Xun Qing, 496. *See also* Xunzi
- Xun Yin, 402
- Xun Yue, 416, 469; biography of Yang Yun, 420, 435–36n65
- Xunzi, 439n138, 490, 515n16; "On the Rites," 496, 504n134
- Xuwu, 407

Y

- yan* (internal ward gates), 180, 187–88, 189fig., 195.
See also wards, gates of
- Yan (kingdom): king of, 486–87, 488, 490, 492, 501n78; Xiongnu raids on, 488. *See also* Liu Dan
- Yan Anle: *Annals* interpretation preserved by Kong Yingda, 471; disciples of, 470–71, 476n55; mentioned, 469; school of interpretation, 461–62, 471, 472; teachings of, 465

- Yan Buke, 257n17
- Yan Cen, 307
- Yan Pengzu, 469, 470–71; school of interpretation, 461–62, 472; students of, 471, 476n58
- Yan Shigu: on Feng Shang, 495–96; *Hanshu* commentary on Yang Yun poem, 428; *Hanshu* commentator, 215n16, 217n58, 262n76, 306, 318n50, 366n71
- Yan Ying, 402
- Yandi (Shen Nong), 376, 386n65
- Yang Bojun, 466
- Yang Chang, 412, 432n1
- Yang Fu, 280
- Yang Guang, 215n21
- Yang Hong, 148n7
- Yang Hou, 306
- Yang Kuan, 26, 184, 191, 196
- Yang Qing, 444, 447, 459n48
- Yang Tan, 412, 427
- Yang Xin, 146
- Yang Xing, 326, 327–29
- Yang Xiong: on attention to substance, 237n67; collation of texts for imperial library, 12, 451, 452; *Fayan (Exemplary Figures)*, 229; as logical thinker, 515n16; mentioned, 483, 497, 498n4; modeled writings on Kongzi's sayings, 229, 370; and the notion of authorship, 459n41; promoter of Sima Qian's history, 44n43, 367, 451, 477; relationships with other men of letters, 384n6; support for Wang Mang, 234
- Yang Yun: biography of, 411–12, 417–18, 424, 433n11, 437n105; bureaucratic reforms of, 414; career of, 412–13, 415, 433n10; as Commissioner of the Palace, 415–17; conundrum of, 432; Court Official's post of, 412–13, 432n4, 433n8; demotion and execution of, 412, 420–21, 427–28, 435n63; denounced by Dai Changle, 412, 415, 416, 418–20, 429, 435n50; ennoblement of, 414, 433n18; exchange with Yang Tan, 427, 430; and Han Yanshou, 417, 434n43; *Hanshu* biography of, 411, 413, 417, 432n1, 433n13; as leader of Palace Guards, 413–15; letter to Sun Huizong, 422–27, 428–29, 432, 435–36n65, 438nn116,117; as member of a faction, 417, 434–35n44; money-making ventures of, 422–25; personality of, 417–18, 480; poem of, 426, 428, 429–31; reception by later poets, 431–32; relation to Sima Qian, 411, 425, 432; revealed plot against Xuandi, 412, 413–14; and the *Shiji*, 477, 479–80, 498n6, 500n43; trial and execution of, 432nn2,3; and Xiao Wangzhi's views on the Xiongnu, 416–17, 434n36
- Yang Zhong, 412–13, 432n1, 465, 475n27
- Yangjiagou, 211
- Yangling, 33, 44n32, 212, 214–15n4, 217n50; illustrations generated for, 33fig.
- Yangshe Hu, 400
- Yangshe Xi. *See* Shuxiang
- Yangzi River, 48n86
- Yanling: archaeological investigation at, 210–11; burial of Chengdi at, 201; construction of, 207, 332, 333; plan view of, 203map; Qin Gongling, 210; site of, 204, 206, 207, 208; tomb of Chengdi's first empress Xu, 211; view of site, 202fig.; Yangjiagou site, 211. *See also* Chengdi, two tombs of
- Yantie lun (Debates on Salt and Iron)*, 230, 231, 237n58, 238n79, 286n46, 290n121, 387n83
- Yao: burial of, 372; and cosmic cycles, 294; descent of Han ruling house from, 226–27, 236nn31,32, 316n11, 376, 379; “five hundred years” of, 295; mentioned, 226, 236n30, 386n65; ruler-official relations under, 251
- Yasui Kōzan, 472, 476n68
- Yates, Robin, 45n52
- Ye (Wei capital), 74n51
- Yellow Bell (Huangzhong), 312, 321n100
- Yellow Emperor (Huangdi): burial of, 208; citation on, from *Appended Phrases*, 376; comments in sexual cultivation texts, 443; lines of transmission from, 226, 236n30, 485, 501n63; mentioned, 474n7; role in medical history, 447, 448
- Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic (Huangdi neijing)*, 445–46, 458n24
- Yellow River, 43n18, 105, 126n65
- yi (medicine), 445, 446, 450, 453–54, 459n48
- Yi classic. *See* *Changes*
- Yi Feng: attempt to move capital to Luoyang, 74n51; biography of, 304, 319n61; memorial regarding calendrical cycles, 295–96; proposed ritual reform under Yuandi, 272; ritual teachers of, 272, 287n54
- Yi Ping, 480, 499n25, 500n43
- Yi Xu, 458n23
- Yi Yin, 251–52, 376, 456; *Decoctions*, 447, 448
- Yibo, temple of, 466
- Yijing. *See* *Changes*

Yili (*Ritual Ceremonies*), 279, 380, 382, 388n116
 Yin (Shang) dynasty, 52n147, 230, 406
 yin and yang: cyclical nature of, 296, 304–5; and natural disasters, 312–13, 321n104; worship of, 284n1, 285n29. *See also* Five Phases
 Yin Xian, 377, 378, 387n75
 Ying Shao: *Fengsu tongyi* (*Comprehensive Discussion of Customs*), 185–86; *Hanshu* commentary of, 306
 Ying Zheng, 58
 Yinshu (*Pulling Book*), 443
 Yinwan documents, 36, 511
 Yishi (*History of Medicine*), 456
 Yishuo (*Sayings about Healers*), 456
 Yiwen leiju (*Anthology of Literary Excerpts Arranged by Categories*), 393, 394
 yiyao (medicaments), 446
 Yong: abolition of cults at, 273, 287n65; altars at, 263; city of, in Qin, 285n25; as cult site and administrative center, 270; imperial sacrifices at, 32map, 279; as Qin and pre-imperial cult site, 116, 266, 267; sacrifices associated with rivers, mountains, and asterisms, 274, 287n68; sacrifices by Chengdi at, 288n79; as site of Wudi's sacrifices, 268–69
 Yong Bo, 437n100
 Yong River, 104
 Yong Sheng, 382, 389n117
 yongdao (palisaded roads), 117, 128n95
 Yonglu. *See* Cheng Dachang
 You, King, 235n23
 You Ziyong, 346n90
 Youfufeng, 15
 Yu (legendary ruler), 251–52, 376
 Yu Dingguo, 173n50, 193, 419–20
 Yu Qing, 475n28; *Yushi chungiu* (*Mr. Yu's Annals*; attrib.), 465
 Yu Weichao, 159, 171n31, 173n60
 Yu Yong, 193
 Yuan Ang, 491–92
 Yuan Guanghan, 43n28
 Yuan She, 194
 Yuandi (48–33 BCE): abandoned idea of founding new mausoleum towns, 142; and administration of mausoleum towns, 50n131; ban on migrations, 214; bureaucracy under, 257n12, 258n21; burial of, 39, 274–75; contrasted with Chengdi, 234; contrast to Wang Zhengjun, 234; controversies under, 227–30; decision “not to

bother the common people,” 50n121; described as humane, 421–22; devotion to music and amusements, 127n79, 221, 234n3; emptying of imperial storehouses, 12; favored Liu Kang, 355; and the Five Classics, 44n45, 44n46; flooding under, 103, 123n26; heir apparent of, 221, 222, 223, 258n25; and the imperial cults, 228, 264, 272, 274, 276–77, 288n80, 290n117; and the kingdom of Zhongshan, 358; and the mother of Liu Kang, 330; response to omens, 42n15; restoration of royal line, 356, 357, 364n36; and ritual precedents, 288n72; solar eclipses and omens under, 324, 342–43n7; tomb of, 208, 212, 214n3, 215n4, 216n33, 515n20; and the Wang clan, 495; and Xiao Wangzhi, 147–48n5

Yuanshi Ceremonies, 278–83, 284, 289n112, 290n114; conceptual plan of, 283, 283fig.

Yudi. *See* Shun

Yuewang Fu, 400

Yufu, 443, 445, 447, 454

Yunling, 212, 217n58

Yunmeng documents on laws, 197n23

Yunyang Palace, 489

Yushi chungiu (*Mr. Yu's Annals*; attrib. Yu Qing), 465

Yushi Dafu (Imperial Counsellor), xi, 45n49, 222, 235, 241, 257n7, 388, 438

Z

Zacharias's Chronicle, 48n90

zaiyi (catastrophes and anomalies), 466–67,

475n31. *See also* natural disasters

zeng (steamer), 161fig.

Zha Zhilong, *Dai Shi* (*History of Dai*), 476n48

Zhai Fangjin: career path of, 261n53; conflict with the Colonel of Internal Security, 248–50; conflict with Zhu Bo, 261n51; expounded *Zuozhuan* with Liu Xin, 378, 470; as Governor of the Capital, 208; as *Guliang* expert, 470; and the power of the Wang clan under Chengdi, 246–47; and purge of Chunyu Chang, 339; and the reforms of 8 BCE, 245, 248–50, 251, 253, 255–56, 258–59n27, 258n26, 261n52, 360; reputation for honesty and classical erudition, 246, 259–60n38; and selection of Liu Xin as heir, 360; staff of, 339; submitted memorial charging Zhang Fang with crimes, 336, 345n67; suicide of, 339–40, 346nn84,85

Zhang Anshi: family cemetery of, 30, 133, 142,

- 149nn36,37, 172nn31,32; received honor of conferred burial, 142
- Zhang Binglin, 407
- Zhang Chang, 45n58, 427
- Zhang Duansui, 474n9
- Zhang Fang, 332, 335, 336, 339, 345n67
- Zhang Heng, 515n16; “Western Capital” *fu*, 27–28, 72n22, 150n42, 175–76, 177–80, 194
- Zhang Jihai, 72n22, 197n11
- Zhang Kuang, 327, 330, 344n35
- Zhang Li, *You chengnan ji*, 121n6
- Zhang Qian, 495, 514n8
- Zhang Qiao, 393, 396, 406, 407
- Zhang River, 122n10
- Zhang Shoujie: mentioned, 489; on the Northern Towergate of Weiyang Palace, 72n25; *Shiji* commentary, 483, 496, 499n36, 500n50, 504n134; *Shiji zhengji* (*Corrected Meanings in the Shiji*), 62, 478
- Zhang Tan: dismissal from office, 287n65; as Imperial Counsellor, 222, 357, 363n16; and Liu Qin of Huaiyang, 353, 364n43; sought to abolish imperial shrines, 287n65; and the suburban sacrifices, 272
- Zhang Tang, 143, 172n32, 217n23, 385n9, 502n98
- Zhang Terrace, 21, 56, 58
- Zhang Xiangyu, 148n8, 516n24
- Zhang Xuan, 471
- Zhang Yan: on additions to *Shiji*, 484, 486, 496–97; commentary cited in *Hanshu*, 499n36; commentary on *Shiji*, 498n11, 500n46; commentary regarding Yang Yun, 428, 435n50, 437n108, 439n133, 479; criticized style of Chu Shaosun, 494; and the identity of Master Chu, 499n36; on missing *Shiji* chapters, 480–82, 487, 496; version of *Shiji* known to, 500n43
- Zhang Yanshou, 143, 419
- Zhang Yi, 474n5
- Zhang Yu: appointment as Chancellor, 41n9, 330; burial plot of, 45n50, 260n45; consulted by Chengdi, 337; protégé of, 345n73; relationship with Wang family, 247, 260n45; support for 8 BCE reforms, 247, 250, 253, 260nn44,45
- Zhang Zhongjing (Zhang Ji): account of medical traditions, 454, 455; influenced by Sima Qian, 444; as part of medical history, 447, 448, 456; selected teachings from old texts, 451; *Shanghan zabing lun* (*Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Various Illnesses*), 446–47, 451
- Zhangdi (r. 75–88 CE), 295, 316n14, 388n93
- Zhangguoce (*Stratagems of the Warring States*), 451
- Zhangjiashan documents, 36, 242, 409n37, 443, 506. *See also* “Zhi lü” (“Statute on Salary Rank”)
- Zhangye Commandery, 198n29
- Zhao (kingdom), 350, 381, 388n109
- Zhao, Lady (Lady of the Hook and Dart Palace), 489, 491, 495
- Zhao Chongguo, 143
- Zhao consort family, 42n16, 224, 358, 360, 365n59
- Zhao Feiyan: and the denunciation of Xu Kua, 209, 216n45; installed as empress, 42n16, 210, 223, 332–33, 358–59; and omen reports under Chengdi, 324, 331, 476n48
- Zhao Gao, 373, 385n26
- Zhao Guanghan, 45n58
- Zhao Ji, 402
- Zhao Jieyu (Gouyi), 217n58
- Zhao Lin, 358, 359, 365n59
- Zhao She, 403–4
- Zhao sisters, 41n9, 49n118, 222–23, 335. *See also* Zhao Feiyan; Zhao Zhaoyi
- Zhao Wu, 402
- Zhao Yang, 402
- Zhao Zhaoyi, 223
- Zhaodi (r. 87–74 BCE): death of, 371; grain stores under, 112; and Huo Guang as regent, 485; mother of, 217n58, 488–89; prepared tomb at Yunling for his mother, 212, 217n58; rebellion against, by Liu Dan, 488, 502–3n100, 502n89; as son of Wudi, 488–89, 492, 501n78, 502n100; subject to the will of those around him, 234n2; tomb of, 151n59, 212, 216n33, 260n45. *See also* Pingling
- Zhaomu ritual system, 207–8, 216nn32,33, 228, 237n46, 515n20
- Zhaoxiang, King of Qin (r. 307–251 BCE), 56
- Zhaoyang Audience Hall, 21
- Zhaoyang Palace, 49n118
- Zhending, 350
- Zheng, state of, 123n29
- Zheng Dangshi, 105
- Zheng Fu, 320n79
- Zheng Guo (architect), 123n29
- Zheng Guo Canal, 103, 104, 122n10, 123nn29,38
- Zheng Shu, 299, 318n42
- Zheng Xuan: *Breaking through the Mohist Defense*, 472; “Liuyi lun” (“On the Six Classics”), 476n55

- Zheng Yan, 146
- Zhengwangcun cemetery, grave goods, 157*fig.*
- zhi* (substance) versus *wen* (refinement), 229–30, 237n67
- “Zhi lü” (“Statute on Salary Rank”), 242, 257n8
- Zhiyang, 47n76
- Zhizhi *chanyu*, 206, 374
- Zhong Wenzhen, 464
- Zhonghang clan of Jin, 402
- Zhonglang (Courtiers of the Palace/Palace Guards), 413, 432n6, 433n14
- Zhonglang Jiang (Leader of the Gentlemen of the Palace/Leader of the Courtiers of the Palace), 432n6, 433n16
- Zhongli, Master, 490
- Zhongqiu (city-state), 398, 409n34
- Zhongshan: dates of operation, 351; expansion of, 355; kings of, 348, 355, 358, 359–60. *See also* Liu Xing
- Zhongwei (Commissioners of the Capital), 242, 253, 360–61
- Zhou, Duke of: comparison with Huo Guang, 485, 486, 495; imitated by Wang Meng, 71, 74n49, 485, 486, 495; and King Cheng, 489, 491–92, 502n93; as model of “true kingship,” 290n121
- Zhou Changshan, 181, 182, 187, 198n31
- Zhou dynasty: attention to *wen*, 230; and calendrical computations, 304; and succession of the Three Dynasties, 501n63; traditions of, 229, 357, 362, 462–63, 464. *See also* classicists; Western Zhou
- Zhou Huijuan, 121n8
- Zhou Kan, 343n11, 371
- Zhou li* (*Rituals of Zhou*), 445, 513, 517n47
- Zhou Qingchen, 502n98
- Zhou Shouchang, 428
- Zhou Zhenhe, 42n18
- Zhougong, 229
- Zhouguan* (*Offices of Zhou*), 357
- Zhouli* (*Rituals of Zhou*), 445, 513, 517n47
- Zhoumu (Provincial Shepherds), 241, 244, 247, 255, 257n9, 260nn47,48, 261n51. *See also* Regional Inspectors
- Zhu Bo, 143, 247, 257n8, 260n47, 261n51
- Zhuan Xu, 376, 386n65
- Zhuangzi* (*Master Zhuang*), 404–5, 431, 440n148, 515n16
- Zhufu Yan, 356
- zhuhouwang*, 347, 357, 360, 362n1, 365n70
- zhuiwen* (making passages belong together), 508, 515n16
- Zhuo Commandery, 406
- Zichuan, 350
- Ziwu Valley, 62, 64; along north-south axis of Western Han Chang’an, 63*fig.*
- Zixia, 474n9
- Zongzheng (Commissioner of the Imperial Clan), 45n51, 241, 288, 333, 362n3, 371, 385n28
- Zou commentarial tradition, 462, 473n3
- Zou county, 381, 388n109
- Zou Yan, Five Powers cycle, 293, 295, 314, 320n76
- zu* (conscript servicemen), 124n47. *See also* laborers, conscript
- zun* (goblets), 160, 509
- Zuo Qiuming, 378, 388n91, 472–73
- Zuo Xian, 471
- Zuopingyi, 15
- Zuozhuan* (*Zuo Traditions*): Academician for, 379, 387–88n91; account of Attendant He, 449, 454; advocacy of, 236n32, 377–79, 380, 383, 470; in Archaic Script, 378, 380, 387n82, 388n99; attempt to secure imperial sponsorship for, 367, 377, 383; cited in arguments, 375, 376, 377; cited in Liu Xin’s *fu*, 393, 397–98, 399, 406, 407; as commentary to the *Annals*, 461; elevated over *Gongyang* and *Guliang*, 472–73; Li Yu’s *Objections* to, 472